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RALPH ELLIOT

A TALE OF THE YEAR EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHT

## CHAPTER XIV

LUIGIA MARINELLO was the only daughter of a widower. A big fair girl, even stronger than she looked, her father left the affairs of his house in Valle, and the pastures on Monte Rite with the cattle and hay, entirely to her. He went off, so soon as the snow was clear, to the logging, was little at home except in winter, and was, as an easy-going, pleasure-loving sportsman, altogether useless as the father of a handsome marriageable girl with a good dowry for Cadore.

So Luigia chose the first really fine day of April to pack a basket with provisions and drive the cows before her to the lowest grazing-ground on Monte Rite. She opened the barn, eat her polenta, made a few simple domestic arrangements for a stay of some days, slung her basket over her shoulder, and strolled off into the woods to gather firing. Her pet goat ran beside her, company enough for a girl who was tired to death with the long winter days and the gossip of the old crones over their firesides.

She heard the *yödel* on the hillside. "One of Calvi's boys practising, perhaps," she said to herself, as the crash of the boulder struck her ears. It was not very safe to go on, but she wanted another log or two, and so she came to the place of the tragedy.

"On purpose, because he is Tedesco," was her first thought. She scrambled down to the thicket, wondering if he were dead that he lay so still and huddled. Turning him over with her strong arms, she felt him stir, and, Tedesco or not, knew that

she must help to her utmost. The water was too far below, but wet moss and grass were at her hand. She peered down the scored crumpled track of the boulder, very pitiful for the end of the horse that had, no doubt, been his friend as the goat and Nenni, the white cow, were hers.

"Get out!" The English words, which Luigia took for German, showed that the lad was coming to himself. Before she knew what he was going to do, he tried to scramble to his feet, muttered "My ankle," and slipped into her arms again unconscious.

She looked at the wall of rock, at the path she had made in reaching him, and pondered. He was not a big man, but a dead weight is difficult to carry. To call for help would be giving him to his enemies; to let him lie might mean his death.

She remembered a game they had played in the summer. They had seen how much hay they could carry heaped in the baskets on their backs. Pietro da Via had laughed at the girls; but Luigia had challenged and beaten him by topping the little hay-stack with a log and carrying it, evenly poised, up the steep path to the barn. There was the basket, if she could but get him to lie on a log across it and hold on to her. As he stirred slightly again, she summoned her Italian, which was pure for a Cadorina. "Sit so, on that." She adjusted the wood, a fork inside the basket. "Now, when I raise it, hold on to me."

Dazed with pain in his head and ankle, he was too stupid to resist the undignified position. Luigia took a long breath as the trusty leather straps tightened over her shoulders. It was the awkwardness more than the weight that strained her, for the hill-woman was used to heavy loads from her childhood. Her straw-soled shoes found foot-hold among the slipping stones, and on she toiled, bending but not swaying, up to the path under the rock. His grip had slackened, but with raised arms she held him somehow. Birribi ran whinnying by her side, wondering why she moved so slowly over the sloping meadow. Once in the barn, she unshipped her load very gently on to the hay she had prepared for her own bed.

He said "Thank you," when freed from his neckcloth, and given a cup of milk,—the only remedy that suggested itself to

her. Perhaps he was a Croat, though surely such a boy would never roast children on bayonets and eat them. She was examining him for broken bones or other injuries, and he was watching her, slowly coming to his senses and wondering vastly, when a blackbird whistled shrilly. Luigia's strong brown hands trembled suddenly, and a slow flush crept to the roots of her yellow hair. She lifted her head, made a gesture as if to rise and go, then forced herself to kneel motionless, quivering with the effort. Again came the whistle and Birribi bleated hoarsely as if in answer. The girl moved like one under compulsion to the open door. "Lal!"

"My dear!" He doffed his round hat, and kissed her with the air of a man of fashion. Part of his fascination lay in his outlandish manners.

"How did you know I—" ? she began, twisting her apron with her fingers.

"By asking down there. Now, have you met or seen a man on a horse,—young, brown-haired, with blue eyes and a strange tongue? for I've lost such an one in these pretty little hills."

"Why, he's here! I found him an hour ago under the cliff." Lal pushed past her into the hut.

"Hullo!" said Ralph.

"Yes, Englishman; I think you have need of the gipsy."

"Glad to see you," said Ralph in German.

"Here Italian is the better tongue, brother. Oh yes, I speak it, but not over there. Luigia *carissima*, this is my friend."

"But he is a Tedesco."

"No he comes from over-sea. Now let us find out what is wrong. So-o; the ankle hurts, and there is perhaps pain in the head? A few days' rest, dear sir, and my simple remedies." Lal said the last words in the pompous tones of the quack doctor imitating the real physician, and Luigia and Ralph both laughed.

"There's one thing,—oh Lal, where's the mare?" said Ralph.

The gipsy looked at Luigia, who shook her head. "She was dead," she said simply.

"You're sure?" asked Ralph anxiously.

"I will go and see," said the gipsy. "Under the rock they call the Temple? Very good."

Luigia followed him to the door, and stood there irresolute, twisting her apron with hands not used to nervous gestures, and thinking. Were she wise, she would go straight back to Valle. The men could use the barn as they pleased; Lal could nurse the stranger and cook; she might return in a week when they would be gone. Why does a bird sit on a twig to wait for the snake? Why, sometimes, cannot a woman fly from the danger she sees?

Ralph was clear in his head now, but feeling sadly shaken and bruised, and very sorry for his throbbing ankle.

The sunset fires darkened to purple outside, and still the girl stood by the door irresolute. The gipsy came, noiseless, through the dusk. "The cows await milking," he said to her in the tone of suggestion, and she mechanically moved out to obey him without a word. "She is dead, brother, was dead in a moment, crushed as she fell. I have brought these things back;" he dropped the saddle-bags, and bridle on to the floor as he spoke, and looked away from Ralph.

The boy clenched his hands. He had been very fond of Countess, and he had never lost a horse before; his first pony, Black Prince, was still doing garden-work at home. That she should have died in his service so quickly seemed a most pitiful thing; not for some minutes could he steady his voice. "How can I get on to Cortina?" he asked at length.

"I think you cannot get to Cortina for two reasons. First, you cannot walk for some days; second, if I found you a mule or pony and you tried to go on, you would be shot as an Austrian. The country here is all alight. If the Count got through, he was lucky."

"You don't know anything about him?"

"Therefore he has done it safely," said Lal soothingly. It pleased him to play Providence to this English boy. Folk were apt to rate the gipsy unimportant.

"Oh Luigia," he called. "Supper would be well, for I have far to go to-night."

"You do not stay with us?" she asked, nearly dropping a frothing pail of milk, and seeking his eyes like an Indian squaw.

"I return," he vouchsafed.

Ralph was glad of his supper; a fomentation brewed by Lal



took away enough of the pain to let him sleep, and his next impression was of daylight and Luigia clattering milking-pails again.

## CHAPTER XV

THE combined smell of hay and wood-smoke ever after brought a certain scene to Ralph's mind. A low raftered place, made lower still by a loft with a ladder against it ; a smoke-blackened chimney in an angle ; some wooden stools and benches, some copper pots and earthenware bowls, and a great deal of hay,—those were the things round him. The memorable part was the series of pictures framed by the wide doorway and window whose wooden shutter was opened every dawn by Luigia. A foreground of larch-tops, a middle distance of wooden slopes beyond the Boîte, and then the mass of Antelao reaching to heaven, made a whole varying in colour with each hour of the days. The great King of Cadore sometimes seemed to hang stark overhead, sometimes to rise dreamily aerial miles away, and took all shades the eye could imagine from grim rock-grey to rose-flushed snow.

Ralph could be very placid when action was impossible. He was no nervous fretter against fate ; indeed, like many a good horse, he needed riding with spurs. He could not go on, but lying still was pleasant enough. If he moved, his ankle reminded him that there were many things worse than soft hay, fir-scented sunshine, plenty of polenta and milk, and unlimited time for sleep. Luigia went down to Valle each evening at dusk, and returned with the first light. Her household, which consisted of an old man and his half-crippled wife, received scant attention, and all her skill was needed to explain her devotion to the lonely barn. But the wives of Valle knew her for an eccentric, a motherless girl of wilful ways that would lead to no good.

The scanty news she brought to Ralph was not reassuring. Calvi was preparing a strong resistance in Cadore, and only the vaguest rumours came up from Italy. Those days of Santa Giustina and Pastrengo, when twelve hundred Austrians fell in three bitter fights, were, perhaps, the most peaceful of that wild year in Ralph's life. The Pope might give the cause its cruellest blow : Carlo Alberto might vow to fight until there should no longer be an Austrian on Italian soil ; but the spring rain melted the snow and the spring sun brought the lilies and lilacs to

flower without regard to the loyalty of the Tyrolese for Austria or the devotion of the Cadorini to Italy.

In the last light of May-day, when the cows had been milked and the supper was boiling on the fire, the girl sat as usual on the bench by the door with her knitting and talked to Ralph. One is prejudiced in favour of the woman who has saved one's life and nursed one skilfully back to health, and he had an additional reason for liking Luigia in that she was of pleasant speech. A visit to an aunt at Treviso had made her Italian fluent, though full of quaint turns and accents, and had widened her views of life. She told the tales of her hills with a loving pride that Ralph could understand, for he too was a hill-man. Down there, beyond Valle, was the place of a great old fight. A certain Massimiliano had met his foes and made the Ruolan run red that day. One Messer Tiziano (perhaps the Signor' Inglese had heard of him?) who lived, oh many years ago, had painted that battle in Venice, it was said. He had painted many pictures of the Santissima Madonna and saints at Pieve, at Venas, and for other churches round about. Did the Signore see that rock of Antelao standing grey when all the rest was still in sunshine? A man of Vallesina was killed there last autumn. He was after chamois; oh yes, many chamois could be seen in these hills; her father had killed seven in the winter just gone. So Luigia talked of ancient and modern history, until her blue eyes grew troubled with thoughts, and her words ceased.

Ralph desired to know more of Lal Bolgaz, whose wanderings seemed to extend over so large a slice of Europe. At mention of the gipsy Luigia first fell silent, and then answered with reserve. She had known him for some years; he came to Cadore, not often,—perhaps he had been there three times—gipsies were wanderers; but did the Signor' Inglese think them so bad as people made out?

"Lal is a good friend to me. I have eaten and drunk with him and found him true," said Ralph. Through his mind ran a ballad that Jeannie Carruthers had once repeated to him about Johnnie Faa and the "fair young wilful lady" who left lord and home for the gipsy. There was another too.

"Loud sang the Spanish cavalier

And thus his ditty ran:

'God send the Gipsy lassie here,

And not the Gipsy man—'

He went on, thinking aloud.

"What are those words?" asked Luigia.

"A song about gypsies. A friend of mine thinks they are not to be trusted."

"It is not *that*," said Luigia, rising restlessly; "I do not trust him, but I cannot trust myself either."

The trouble was plain enough, but the help for it was not so clear. Lal Bolgaz, outcast, brother of a dancing-girl, wanderer, a man of many parts, was no mate for this deep-bosomed, fair girl whose eyes should have been as placid as those of her cows, and whose lines should have been laid between the quiet uplands and the sleepy valleys. Yet the spell was cast, and Luigia Marinello was fighting a losing battle with her fate.

That May-day of sunshine and young green was followed by wild weather. The mists, coming down from the mountains to meet those rising from the streams, were reft by gusts of wind, turned to rain, and settled to white fog again, like the brewing of some terrible liquor. Luigia would come in with the raindrops glittering in her yellow hair, and the smoke whirled and curled until they had to make the shortest possible work of the cooking.

Still Lal Bolgaz did not return, though Ralph could limp about comfortably now, and every day that he stayed was a danger to Luigia. Yet she would not hear of his going, and, indeed, he could suggest no plan himself. On Sunday she did not go uphill as usual, but put on a black lace mantilla with a shawl over it and struggled through a squall to Mass. The pose of the faded figure of St. Sebastian in the big old picture opposite her seat reminded her of Ralph, until she nearly cried in her sore perplexity. There were so many troubles; the secrecy and danger weighed on her simple soul, already overburdened with a love that was indiscretion if not sin. To pray for Lal was her daily habit; now she added a special petition to St. Sebastian, the protector of brave boys, for the Englishman who might not even be a Christian at all.

When Mass was over, knots of women and girls, black-shawled widows, and children with bright kerchiefs, lingered about the little green *piazza* rising out of a sea of fog, to hear and give news, and exchange glances or chaff with the men who nearly all wore a bit of tricolour in their hats or coats. One staid old fellow, with knee-breeches showing his thin bow-legs, gave Luigia a message

from her father. Marinello had found work for some time, probably for all the summer, and his daughter was to keep the farm in order and mind the white heifer at her calving. Luigia acquiesced without question; she was used to her parent's ways. "I am up at the pasture for that, and because the young grass is good. No, Nina, I have no need of help. My arms are strong enough, and the barn would be small for two of us to live in. I would rather walk there and back." As the girl spoke she was listening with strained attention to the talk of a group close by. Young Colletti had had word from the south. Nugent was marching on Cadore; he had it from a gipsy; perhaps Crescentini remembered the man, Lal something, who shot so well at the mark last Redentore? They moved off, and Luigia dared not stay longer. She went home, gave her orders, packed her basket with necessities, and then made for the barn with all haste.

It was a foible with Lal never to cross an open space when a way round under cover was available. Even when caution was unnecessary, the gipsy invariably stalked his friends, circled round them like a peewit, and would stand motionless watching them without giving a sign of his presence. Luigia had been waiting restlessly for him all day, and Ralph shared her impatience. For the fifth time he had said: "It's very queer that Lal doesn't turn up," when the vibrant voice answered, "He is here, brother," and Lal Bolgaz smiled his tight-lipped smile at him.

Luigia said nothing, but went on with her preparations for supper, listening meanwhile, and ready to do her master's bidding at a gesture.

"Do you remember, brother," Lal began, "when I gave you news of Milan, that you would not believe?"

"The night before I saw Jellachich? Yes."

"Ah, you saw the little Ban? There is a man, brother!—but that is far away. I come with news again. The Italians are winning down in Lombardy, but Nugent's men have entered Belluno. Which pleases you, Englishman?"

"Ah Lal, I am neither Italian nor Austrian, but English, as you say. Then I can rejoin Count Ladislas, or the army at any rate?"

With the switch he carried Lal rapidly marked out the theatre of operations on the floor. "Here is Belluno, here are we; between, Calvi and his men are in every bush. As it is, they have driven back the Black and Yellow once, at Longarone.

The road to Cortina is blocked. If you would leave Cadore it must be by the south and as an Italian, brother."

"What do you mean?"

"When is a gipsy without a plan? You can stay here no longer,—for the danger to Luigia as well as to yourself." The girl lifted her head as though to protest, but did not speak. "I have a good friend, a patriot, who will steer a raft of logs and a man on it, if the man would be making his way through the Austrians to join Durando. He might be some sort of foreigner who had enlisted as a crusader, and wished to let the General know how the Free Corps in the Trentino were faring. If the raft were stopped at Belluno it would be the fortune of war; if not,—you are English, not Austrian."

"But, Lal, I know nothing of the Trentino, and I've General Nugent's pass in my pocket. They'd know me for an Englishman in a jiffy, if the Austrians happen not to take us."

"Give me the paper; so,"—and he threw it into the fire.

Ralph shrugged his shoulders. He objected slightly to this change of politics, but fate had led him into the coil, and fate, acting by Lal, should pull him out.

"Nugent knows you; so do some of his officers. The Englishman who rode so well at Gorizia has been heard of by many who have not seen him. Besides, patriots are quicker than the regulars at shooting spies, as a general rule." Ralph laughed; a touch of the grim was necessary for his full appreciation of a joke. "So to-morrow you and I will go down to Perarolo,—by the way, that German at Longarone has been killed—and towards evening you shall start down the Piave. It will be boating after your heart, brother."

"I don't care much about boating," said Ralph, and Lal looked at him queerly. He had the savage's delight in testing a white man, and the savage's mixed contempt and respect for him.

Luigia gave them of her very best for supper, a stew of kid and Indian meal, and set it before them with a neat-handed grace. Ralph tried to draw her into the conversation, but she only answered in monosyllables, while her eyes hardly left Lal's face. He had no need of speech to make known his wishes.

When she had left them in the grey moonlight, when the gipsy had knocked the ashes out of his last pipe and was coiled like a dog in the hay, the English boy lay long awake. All the sounds were so familiar,—the distant roar of the Boite, the tinkle

of the cattle moving in the byre, and, as the dawn came, the songs of the birds and the stirring of the wind in the big trees. To go out of this backwater into the heat and clash of fighting men seemed stupid now that it was inevitable. Not that his interest in the strife was dead : Austrian and Italian, they were both fine fellows and finely exciting to watch ; but these quiet hills were the proper place for him,—they seemed more like home. He felt that he could get along very well without a clamorous cause or an iron rule to uphold ; and he thanked heaven he was English, even as he dozed off with a thrill of pleasure at the coming adventure.

Luigia said good-bye with more than conventional kindness. She slipped a little rosary of garnets into his hand as she pressed it, and her eyes spoke more clearly than her lips. Ralph blushed, met her with a look of friendly understanding, and did his best to render due thanks. He left the English saddle, bags, and all the odds and ends that could not be crammed into a red-spotted handkerchief, to her, but he knew better than to offer a *kreutzer* of payment.

"*Addio, Luigia,*" he said at last. "*Prego,*"<sup>1</sup> she returned, and stood, with Birribi at her skirts, watching them down the slope. A mile further, at a turn, Lal looked back, and Ralph followed his example ; they could see the barn, and Luigia standing still in the same attitude. Irma von Leichtenberg, Luigia Marinello, —would ever a woman so watch his going ?

## CHAPTER XVI

PERAROLO seemed altered to Ralph since he had ridden poor Countess up through it. The woods were a mass of young green, the paths slippery with recent rain, both Boîte and Piave roaring and topped with creamy foam, and the little town, too, was seething with excitement ; wounded men limped about its streets cursing their infirmities, and women hurried to and fro for comfort more than of necessity. Calvi would make another effort ; no, he was only going to hold the upper passes ; the Croats were coming ; it were better to fly to the highest upland ; so the rumours passed from mouth to mouth. Lal moved at ease and alert in the confusion, and Ralph kept silently at his heels.

<sup>1</sup> *Prego*, literally, "I pray"; a common form of speech in the Cadore dialect.



There was the chance that someone might recognise the rider of a fortnight before ; besides, even his long talks with Luigia had not made him capable of following quick speech in the Cadore dialect.

Light was failing when all arrangements were completed. A stalwart man of about thirty was Lal's friend Barinko. "The boldest of all the valley on a raft," said the gipsy ; "he does not like this night-going, but will take the risk to get you through the Austrians." It was not the most reassuring thing in the world to see the small platform of logs, and know that the best of his trade thought it a risk to tempt the raving Piave by night, but Ralph set his shoulders and said nothing ; it had to be done. Personally, he hated water, and, as he had told Ladislas, held drowning in peculiar horror ; but his fate was leading him, apparently with a special eye to water-perils. So he said, "All right, good-bye, Lal," with an attempt at cheerfulness, seated himself, as directed, on a loose log in the middle of the raft, wrapped his coat over his knees, and awaited events.

Shoved off from the bank, the heavy lashed timber rose to the wash of the current like a horse at a leap. Ralph shut his eyes ; the thing was swamping, and not even a good swimmer could fight long in such a torrent. As no deadly rush of cold water succeeded, he looked again, to find the raft in mid-stream, and Barinko running lightly from side to side, punting with his great iron-shod pole, and keeping all straight. When the first feeling of giddiness had passed, the joy of rapid motion and the excitement of ever-present danger made one forget cramp and cold. Barinko sang at the top of his voice as he steered, and fortunately steered much better than he sang ; rocks threatened and were skirted, little rapids were shot with breathless swoops, and the moon made wonderful lights on the tossing water and the white snows so far above. The broad reaches by Longarone moderated the pace, and Barinko sat down to talk while steering was unnecessary.

"The danger is at Belluno, not here," he said. "There, the Croats are burning and destroying, and it will be well if they do not catch us. I should make a poor bonfire, and have no wish even to be put against a wall and shot, as is their mercy."

"Nor I," answered Ralph, suppressing a desire to stand up for the wildest of Nugent's men.

"But here, as yet, there is not much danger, so I will tell you

a poem that I have made. First I will say it, and then, if you like, I will sing it."

"All right," said Ralph, with resignation. When you are on a raft but a few inches above water-level, the man in competent charge of it, and of you, has the right of the stronger to repeat his poetry if he chance to be a poet. Barinko accordingly proceeded to chant, in a dolorous sing-song, many verses of *ino* and *gino*, varied by *morire* and *uccidere*, with allusions more plain than pretty to the accursed Tedeschi. At the end Ralph politely said *Brava*, and the poet received the praise without undue modesty.

"It is easy to make verses on the river," he said dreamily. "Often I think it is the river that makes the verses and I but read them in her, as the Signore can doubtless do in books. She runs down to the sea near Venice; she has run there since the old days when Venice was head of us all, free people, before the Austrian came. Therefore she remembers, and she tells me of old things as well as of the new hopes." At that moment the raft caught an eddy, danced a waltz in German time, and hurled itself light-heartedly towards a black wave-washed rock. Barinko sank the poet in the waterman for five minutes of hard wrestling, and Ralph admired him most in the latter rôle.

The moon set, darkness ceased to be visible, and only sudden jerks and swirls showed that they were still moving. Barinko fell silent; it taxed his skill and knowledge thus to feel his way down the river whose snags and currents he knew by heart. Sometimes one could almost touch the cliffs with the hand, while the raft jarred and butted like a blind man working his way along a wall. Sometimes there was a slurring whisper of ripples and a dark mass of shore far away.

When the day broke, they could see that a fog had fallen, grey, wet, and muffling. "God wishes us to get through," said Barinko with satisfaction. Indeed, the flat country round Belluno, the gate of Cadore, was entirely hidden, and there seemed a good chance that they might slip past unobserved in such a dawn.

The river broadened, and Barinko fought with a cross-current, —the joining of the Ardo and Piave—which drove them towards a dim height of towers and walls. Fog makes sound singularly clear. Ralph heard the familiar rattle of muskets and the harsh voice of a sergeant changing guard, apparently only a few feet away. He could have been with them in five minutes; a hail,

and all the trouble would have been over ; but it was impossible for obvious reasons. He could not play Barinko false. For himself, the danger among Italians was not great,—at worst, he had not actually borne arms against them ; for Barinko the danger among Austrians was serious. After all, it would not help him to rejoin Ladislav, and for the rest, fate and the Piave might bear him where they willed.

Past the town they floated, Barinko crouching and making no noise with the pole. It might have been only a huddle of logs broken loose and drifting at the speed of the double rivers down to the sea. No folk were astir in conquered Belluno at work among the river-sheds, and Barinko sat up with a grunt when willows replaced buildings. "I would shout *Viva Italia* were I alone, Signore," he said. "As it is, I can only curse the Tedeschi,—so."

"Don't mind me," muttered Ralph to himself. It was rather whimsical that this water-poet should desire the martyrdom which his passenger could so easily have given him.

Barinko ended a fervent string of imprecations with, "But it is better to die for Italy fighting, than against a wall or tarred by Croats."

"Much better ; best of all to live and go on fighting," remarked Ralph prosaically.

"Ah, Signore ; Mazzini has said, the blood of the patriot is the seed of revolution. It has been sown thickly in our Italy."

"If only they wouldn't be so melodramatic," thought Ralph. How was it possible to have sympathy with people who paraded their beliefs and hopes in wastes of high-flown words ? The Austrian said, "Long Live the Emperor, let us fight,"—and he fought. The Italian prayed to heaven, or whatever revolutionary deity he affected, wept and raved,—and what else ? For the story of Somma Campagna and Santa Lucia had not yet been told.

The fog lifted as the light broadened. It was a pretty quiet country, green smiling meadows, rolling wooded hills, little towns clinging to those curious abrupt peaks so characteristic of Titian's landscapes : the valley of the Piave wound about, sometimes broad, sometimes narrow, always beautiful.

Ralph and Barinko stretched themselves, and broke their fast off bread and goat's-milk cheese, which tasted wonderfully good after the strain of the night. A soft grey mist still hid all the

distant landscape, and the world seemed strangely empty of people. Once, they saw a man hurrying on some business that took him straight across country ; a few women showed about the cottages ; it was hard to believe that all this quiet watered land had been, and was still being fought over.

There was Feltre standing away from the river ; its grey old buildings crested by a tower from which flew the black and yellow flag ; a town of indomitable protest against all rule, where the Austrians might destroy the heroes' names on the walls but never their memory. By Quero and Pederoba the river took a wide sweep, but Barinko held to mid-stream. It was like the Tagliamento, very broad, everlastingly changing its channel, and now brimful of snow-water and spring-rain. "Near Cornuda is our landing-place," said the Italian. "There are only odds and ends of troops about here, but the General will be at Cornuda, or they can tell us how to reach him."

Ralph cudgelled his brains to concoct a plausible story for that same General. He could talk enough Italian (such as it was) to baffle questions, perhaps, but suppose someone should know English ? At any rate, he was an Italian sympathiser ; there was no disloyalty to General Nugent in saying so much. The rest must take its chance.

*(To be continued.)*

## COLONIAL VIRGINIA

THAT American fiction should have a fancy for what is known as the Colonial period is only right and natural. To an Englishman of the historical temperament, who has lived long enough in America to absorb its atmosphere, I will venture to say that the retrospect is even more interesting than to a native; for he has the England of reality, not of fancy or of books, behind him. It is in this reflection of old English types in the forests and plantations of America, or rather in the measure of their divergence from them, that much of the attraction lies. It is a want of familiarity with social England, and a consequent misreading of the older social England, that strikes a false note in nearly all American fiction which deals with this period. The note I mean is a constant exaggeration of those features of bygone social life such as any one familiar with the Americans at home would look for, an irrepressible craving for certain decorative and aristocratic accessories; the desire to emphasise the fact that his forbears were not all rough backwoodsmen has carried the novelist into the other extreme, and into a society of gorgeous wights such as my own investigations, which have been neither few nor slight, lead me to mistrust profoundly.

The South, of course, is the chief field for this form of idealism; and when one knows what a flood of nonsense has been written about its social life in the later days of slavery, about people, establishments, manners and customs, all familiar to oneself, one is fully justified in mistrusting the social pictures of the eighteenth century as usually presented, even had one not paid some personal attention to the period.

Virginia is the favourite hunting-ground of the modern novelist, and naturally so, being the oldest, most typical, and most interesting of the Southern Colonies. The rest were modified editions of it, save South Carolina, which in the habits,

tastes, and mode of life of its small upper class approximated more to a West Indian colony. Virginia, at any rate, will be the subject of what I have to say here. I lived in its heart for many years, before its old characteristics had passed away. I was well acquainted with various parts of the State, and closely concerned with those rural economies which to that agricultural community have always been as the breath of life. Its people were my daily neighbours and acquaintances, and some of them my intimate friends. The past history of the Old Dominion recent and remote interested me intensely from the first moment, and through many years the talk of old people, the origin (generally cloudy) of families, nearly all English or Welsh, the old English words and idioms, old local books and letters,—all these things, as they came in my way in different parts of the State, made a good foundation for later investigations of a more immediately historical nature undertaken for definite purposes.

There were many engaging superstitions rife among the less informed of the better sort,—a prevalent one being that they were mainly descended from the "British aristocracy," a vague enough phrase to them, for scarcely any one in the country was capable of realising past or present England in a social sense. The Virginians of the Civil War were an intensely provincial people. Unlike the Northerners, they had never travelled nor entertained travellers. They had been cut off for ages from all intercourse with the mother country, while a mighty gap lay between them and their northern neighbours.

Of what like, then, were these Virginians of the old Colonial time whose chivalrous and sumptuous doings are now the burden of so much printed matter?

In 1756, the period of the Anglo-French struggle for North American supremacy, there were about one hundred and seventy thousand white men and one hundred and twenty thousand negroes in Virginia. Of the former five thousand is the outside number who, under the most liberal interpretation, could be reckoned as gentlefolks; of the rest, one hundred thousand may be assigned to the class of rough planters or farmers of variously sized freeholds, and owning between them, perhaps, one half of the negroes. The balance would have been made up of poor whites,<sup>1</sup> indentured servants (three thousand only according to

<sup>1</sup> Poor, or mean whites is a term applied to the illiterate and landless residuum of the white population in the old Slave States.



Jefferson), and frontiersmen settled along the slopes of the Alleghanies, mainly Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, almost another people, much engaged with fighting the Indians. It is only, however, with the five thousand, say eight hundred families (an overstatement probably), that we have to do here, always bearing in mind that the social border-line was ill-defined and shifting. The scale of fortunes was extremely modest. Scarcely any worth mentioning were ever made by growing tobacco, virtually the only cash product. At a valuation of estates and negroes the substance of the ordinary colonial gentleman would figure as trifling beside that of the English squire with whom American writers so frequently compare him, or beside that of the West Indian, and positively microscopic against the wealth of the Anglo-Indian nabob, which latter term is a current one in Virginian literature. Let us begin, however, with the cavalier myth, or, to be quite fair, the semi-myth. As a matter of fact the origin of most of the conspicuous Virginian families differed in social degree scarcely at all from that of their fellow colonists in New England; on this every sober American historian is agreed. In either case it was overwhelmingly middle-class, with a fortuitous sprinkling of the younger sons of squires such as every British colony has absorbed. English squires in the seventeenth century, before the accumulation of land in fewer hands, were plentiful as blackberries; and their redundant offspring were glad enough to take any job that came to hand and adopt trades and callings that even in these democratic days would be accounted derogatory. Many English folk even are astray on this point; but when an American lands a genealogy, doubtful or otherwise, at the portals of Hollybush Hall, Blankshire, he drops at once into a Washington Irving attitude and crowns the lad who sought his fortune in the Plantations, or was sent there, with all the glories of a Vere de Vere. But with the Virginians who founded families in the seventeenth century it was in most cases the survival of the fittest from the rough business of clearing forest country in the face of hostile Indians and other difficulties. Virginia was an Anglican colony, as a matter of course, not being a community of sectaries. It was a large organised community at the time of our Civil War, after which numbers of persons who had fought on the losing side and were ruined, out of employment, or disgusted, emigrated thither. But they were not noblemen, nor often despoiled landowners; they were people of all sorts

rather, while at the Restoration most of those who had any influence went home again.

There were Parliament men even in Virginia, however, and they formed the government during Cromwell's Protectorate ; but they had neither the power nor the wish to persecute the others. Virginia was a happy country that any one could live in unmolested, unless he were a Quaker, or an aggressive sectary. The people were thinly distributed over a wide area, and subject to neither moral nor ecclesiastical censorship. The Anglican Church, though established by a tax paid in tobacco, was weak and ill served, and, though the creed of the better classes, (the others becoming mainly Dissenters in the eighteenth century,) was completely extinguished for a decade at the Revolutionary War. From Colonial times till a few years back Virginian Anglicanism has been conspicuous for its indifference to form, ceremonial, and ritual, for its unlovely edifices and its informal deportment within them.

There is no doubt that towards the close of the Colonial period a few families stood out more prominently in substance and influence from the supposititious eight hundred than was the case in the next century, after Jefferson had abolished primogeniture. It was a small group, of whom the Carters and Randolphs were among the most prominent. As regards the mass of the ordinary gentry, of whom their descendants so often speak with reverential awe, they were on a small scale, unless when compared with the working farmers of the Northern States. It may, indeed, be this standard of comparison running in their minds that partly accounts for the lack of perspective. Two thousand acres made a good substantial estate in the eighteenth century. Land was always cheap in Virginia compared to that in the adjacent free States, and is so still, for the salient reason that on an average it was nothing like so good originally, and for generations was shockingly cultivated. Such an estate in Colonial times, if containing a fair fraction of river-bottom, would have been worth, buildings and all as it stood, from £2 to £4 an acre freehold ; a good deal would have been in timber of only domestic value, and much of it worked-out bushy land. On such a place there were probably forty negroes, ten working men and boys, the rest old people, women, and children. In 1856 they would have been worth £5,000 or £6,000, in 1756 I think not more than £2,000, reckoned as a capitalised labour bill. A few families had

several estates of the size mentioned, but the great majority of this class had only one which was their home, and that, at its best, would be comfortable and sufficiently picturesque, but certainly not baronial or luxurious, or even elegant. Plenty of houses identically the same may be seen to-day upon the James, and elsewhere. They are about the size of large farm-houses in this country, plainly built of brick or wood, with eight or ten rooms, sometimes half panelled. There was scarcely a country house in all Virginia built during the whole slavery time that a modest English squire of £3000 a year would have considered reasonably adequate. Brandon is the show place, and to our eyes seems small enough. Rosewell, with, I think, sixteen rooms, was always quoted as the biggest house in the State; yet a late serious historian of Virginia calls these "great manor houses" and the men who lived in them "nabobs." No wonder the novelist loses his head.

To return to our nabob; his farm, together with fish and game, provided his household with simple abundance. He might have grown a little grain for the West Indies, but his staff as allotted could have manipulated forty acres of tobacco, which, at an average yield of thirty thousand pounds, would have been worth in London at that time anything from £200 to £600, less ocean freight and all expenses. The price, it will be seen, fluctuated enormously. How the commission-merchant treated so remote a customer in those days I do not know, but the latter was generally behindhand. A return ship, however, brought him and his family fresh clothes, pottery, hardware, saddlery or harness, almost nothing being manufactured in Virginia. For an isolated life among friends and relatives, mostly upon the same modest scale, this was very well and very pleasant, but it did not give much opportunity for luxury, sumptuousness, or fashion. But in Colonial Virginia there was no city to tempt the ladies to the extravagances of prolonged social enterprises. The little village of Williamsburg, where the legislature met periodically to wrangle with the governor, had its brief convivialities, though it was incapable of accommodating many people; and such as went on wheels,—an "aristocratic" form of travelling invariably dwelt on with peculiar complacency by the novelists—were no doubt dragged there by four horses, for it is all that two can do to haul a carriage through the proverbial mud and ruts of a Virginian road to-day.

Some half a dozen educated English travellers who paid a round of visits among the Virginian plantations in the eighteenth century have left us their experiences. Their testimony, so far as it goes, is much the most valuable, as they saw with the eyes of men of the world. American writers seem to know nothing about them.

Captain Anbury was a prisoner on parole from Burgoyne's army, and was a year or two in Virginia. He was a welcome guest at many houses, and in his letters home writes most gratefully of his Virginian friends and with great lucidity on things in general. He stayed frequently with the Randolphs, one of the principal families on the James river. Their house was of brick, in two blocks containing four rooms each, and connected by a single long room, which was the parlour furnished with settees. Here, as the captain was sitting with his host and his daughters one day, two rough countrymen walked in with their hats on, and, seating themselves on a sofa, made themselves at home in a fashion which stirred the indignation of our author. On his guest's expressing surprise afterwards Mr. Randolph admitted that it was unpleasant, but had to be endured. Anbury found the Virginian ladies pleasant, frank, and talkative, as indeed they always have been. The Randolph table he describes as simple but abundant, remarking, however, on the absence of wine or liquor; yet costly viands and rare wines play a conspicuous part in the modern chronicles of those days. It is extremely doubtful if the Colonial nabob of Virginia had anything deserving the name of a cellar, though New York and Charleston probably followed the ways of the world in that respect.

Anbury was quartered for a time with a planter of the second class whose descendants are still on the spot and known to me, and who consider themselves, like so many persons in Virginia, as of the old families. This yeoman had a plain wooden house, a few hundred acres, and a bunch of negroes. His own children by negro women gambolled in the yard with his legitimate offspring. He rode round his farm two or three times a day, and in his leisure hours sat on the floor, scraping at a fiddle and drinking rum or peach brandy. The lowest class Anbury describes as disagreeable and ferocious, always eager for a fight, in which the object was to bite off an ear or a nose, or to gouge out an eye. This rings absolutely true, for even in my day among the mean whites this barbarous method of fighting had not

entirely given way to knives or shot-guns, and was the burden of the old men's talk.

Dr. Burnaby, who spent nearly a year in Virginia a little earlier than Anbury, is also an informing and cultivated writer. The country houses at which he visited were set in the middle of great clearings in the forests, constituting the arable land, and connected with their neighbours only by bridle-paths through the woods. They were mostly of wood, painted brown and picked out with white, and surrounded, as in my day, with clusters of negro cabins. The learned doctor found the ladies, as ever, cheerful and pleasant, the men genial but with a certain narrow arrogance due to irresponsible authority over a small cluster of dependants and lack of friction with the outer world. He seems also to have suffered somewhat from the limitation of subjects upon which his hospitable entertainers were able to converse.

The Colonial Virginians scarcely ever travelled, even to other colonies. A few had been educated in the North, a very few at Eton or Westminster; now and then a planter like Colonel Byrd of Westover was in touch with English society. South Carolina seems to have had almost as many people of European education as all the other colonies together. There was the William and Mary College at Williamsburg, to be sure, where the education seems to have been sufficient, but as an antidote to provincialism, of course, useless. The Virginian gentleman of that day was no luxurious, smartly dressed ruffler. He neither gambled, nor drank, nor even fought duels; I can find no trace, oddly enough, of this universal custom, though such meetings doubtless did take place. His whole life, indeed, was antagonistic to roystering or quarrelling. He was a genial, rather sensible, unadventurous, probably narrow-minded rustic; and Dr. Burnaby thought him lazy. In all the colonies there was then a more marked division between a "gentleman" and another than in later days; but social exclusiveness and family pride were not, I think, the feature which the desire for picturesque effect among modern writers has made it. Mr. Moncure Conway in his autobiography declares that the whole thing has been invented since his day; and he was himself brought up as a member of the most prominent group of families in Virginia, whose simple life sixty years ago he incidentally describes. There were good brains in Colonial

Virginia, and when these had been trained by a sufficient education, and exercised in the arena of local politics, the result showed in men like Henry, the Randolphs, Jefferson, and others. Washington stood somewhat apart; his early life and training were different, and his marriage made him about the richest man in the colony; nor is Mount Vernon a typical house; it was adapted to its owner's public position.

I do not know when the craze for feudal and medieval metaphor seized on the less critical American public as regards the South. It rioted ludicrously through Southern journalism in my day, and now I see the grass-farmers of Kentucky have been knighted; baronial honours are still, I think, reserved for Virginians. The Patroons of Colonial New York, who really were a somewhat feudal people, with a free white dependency under them, have been, I think, somewhat badly treated by the picturesque writer.

So far from being barons, dashing blades, or fire-eaters, when their help was sorely needed in the Anglo-French struggle for North America the Virginians did not cut a good figure. The New Englanders were regarded as the military colonists of that day. Massachusetts alone, the equal in size of Virginia, sent out ten to fifteen thousand well-equipped men to fight the French. Two weak battalions were wrung out of Virginia, composed in great part of poor whites who enlisted for the pay, and Scotch-Irish backwoodsmen, fine irregulars but not Virginians at all in the sense here understood. In writing of this war I have had to deal with the constituents of these battalions, and in looking over the meagre list of officers can say with confidence that scarcely a dozen individuals from the supposititious eight hundred families of Virginian gentry are there included; the rest may well have been, what poor Braddock declared they were, innkeepers and horse-copers. Washington cursed his fellow colonists roundly for their apathy and want of patriotism, while trying to hold the Western frontier, actually of their own colony, which for nearly two years was cruelly ravaged by Indians and Frenchmen. But the frontier was inhabited by hardy Scotch-Irishmen who bore the brunt of the attack, and the planters behind the Blue Ridge Mountains, and on the sea-coast, thought themselves safe. Had the war been wholly to the northward, had the struggle not been a critical one in which the fate of every colony was vitally



interested, one would have supposed that such an opportunity for adventure and military distinction would have attracted hundreds of youths from an Anglo-Saxon community of gentlemen and yeomen freeholders numbering over a hundred thousand. One may well ask where were the "knights" and "cavaliers" whose swords jingle so fantastically in the pages of romance. There is not the shadow of a doubt but that, saving Washington and some dozen or two others, they were all at home; men used, moreover, to horses and to fire-arms, who could have been spared from home far more easily than the mechanics, fishermen, and small farmers who crowded to fill the regiments of New England. Even Thackeray in *THE VIRGINIANS* indulges in this sort of loose talk, though he does not profess, of course, to be writing history. There were not five hundred Virginians at Braddock's defeat, but only some two hundred provincials, in part only Virginians, and those mostly backwoodsmen. Their duty was to protect the baggage in the rear, which they did in the accepted backwoods fashion, shooting from behind trees and logs, instead of standing in rows to be shot at, as the unfortunate red-coats were compelled to do for two hours. They did not, as is constantly said, cover the soldiers' retreat, for the entire force stampeded at the same moment across the Monongahela, and there was no attempt to follow them, the plunder being much too valuable. The fact that the Virginians fought reasonably well in the Revolutionary War, and splendidly in recent times in defence of their country, does not in any way exonerate the poor, unwarlike, and selfish spirit shown against the French. It is without parallel, so far as I know, in the history of the British Empire, and seems almost at variance with human nature as illustrated in Anglo-Saxon form.

A. G. BRADLEY

## THE ART OF THE UNREAL

In recent years the Pre-Raphaelites have been engaging much attention. Art-critics have been busy tracing their artistic ancestry ; admirers have been eloquently describing the peculiar beauty of their works ; friends and acquaintances have been giving forth endless reminiscences. And now theorists are debating their real object, and what is the true sense in which we are to understand the word Pre-Raphaelite. It seems that there are two alternatives. On the one side, apparently, it stands for the mediæval inspiration of Rossetti, which he transmitted to his disciples, Burne-Jones and Morris. But Mr. Holman Hunt (and he certainly ought to know) tells us repeatedly that it means nothing of the sort, but fidelity to nature, disregard of convention, literal accuracy of detail. The one party then would represent it as nothing but a specialised offshoot of the Romantic Movement ; the other would make it merely the parent of modern realism.

There are difficulties in accepting either explanation as entirely satisfactory. The Brotherhood was more comprehensive than either Mr. William Rossetti or Mr. Holman Hunt would like us to believe. Dante Rossetti's "Girlhood of Mary Virgin" and Mr. Hunt's "Rienzi" betray wide differences, although they were painted side by side in the same studio. We must, I think, accept the fact that Pre-Raphaelitism included both the eternal rivals, realism and idealism ; and we must try to find some other principle of unity in an art-movement which contained such disparate factors. This cannot of necessity be very sharply marked : it will probably be found to cover much modern art which is not commonly regarded as Pre-Raphaelite ; but perhaps we may from this draw some conclusion as to the artificiality of such brotherhoods in modern days.

The unifying principle of Pre-Raphaelitism appears to be simply

this, that under both its aspects it produces the art of the unreal. Let us look at this for a moment and see wherein it consists.

Throughout the whole procession of time there has been only one reality at any given moment, the reality of the present. That reality changes without ceasing, but its changes lie upon the surface of things; they are obvious and somewhat deceitful. The great stream of life flows on and on, it gathers a little in volume, its eddies shift and curl, but withal it remains so nearly unaltered within the period of history that we may confidently say that we modern men and women are indissolubly connected by our common nature with the past, so far as we can closely examine it. It is this community which allows us to comprehend the past, and it is only so far as we realise this community that our conceptions of the past can be true and vivid. The truth and accuracy of these conceptions, therefore, does not depend upon a minute accuracy of dress and exterior appearance. By concentrating our attention upon these, we lose the essence of the whole. We neglect the life itself by our devotion to antiquarian detail, by our love of those things which chiefly mark the difference between us and them. This is one source of the art of the unreal.

But if they fail, therefore, who try to discern the secret of the past by gazing at its exterior aspects wherein it differs from us, and neglecting our real authentic life wherein we resemble it, still more must they fail who turn away from life altogether and choose to be guided by their own wayward fancies. These men see the outward differences which distinguish individual men, and enlarge them so that all similarity is lost between one and another. They conceive not men but monsters. They forget the sense of brotherhood, of common aims, and emotions. They develop their perception of differences until each becomes a lonely unit isolated in the midst of the unknown. Hence springs that insane thought that what each one sees is his own individual dream, from which men learn to reduce the significance of life to "an idiot's tale, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

We may define the art of the unreal therefore as that which overstates the differences between things, as contrasted with real creative art which dwells chiefly on their similarities. On the one side this unreal art has a certain affinity with science, for what is science but a system of classification, the continual

noting of fresh differences and finer shades of difference? And on the other side it belongs to dreamland, for it presents whatsoever things are fantastical and vain and empty. These two sides correspond to the two sides of Pre-Raphaelitism which are represented on the one hand by Mr. Holman Hunt and on the other by Dante Rossetti.

Let us consider first of all Mr. Holman Hunt's contribution, concerning which we now have had not only ample information in his two most interesting volumes of autobiography, but also opportunity of personal experience in his recent well-attended exhibition.

It must have been obvious to every one who visited the Leicester Galleries that Mr. Hunt is a realist, however much he may disclaim the title. It is shown by his love of excessive finish and detail; it is shown still more evidently by his habitual preference for the undistinguished in human form. He has indeed painted an exquisite and delightful figure in his "Lady of Shalott"; his nun in "Claudio and Isabella" is sweet and dignified; Isabella in his "Pot of Basil" is beautiful; but the sensual faces in his "Hireling Shepherd," the figure of Claudio in the scene from "Measure for Measure," the crowded figures in his Syrian pictures, and many other details that could be mentioned, all betray one who does not readily conceive ideal beauty, one who is naturally inclined to realism in art.

But he is more than realist, he is a historical realist. Most of his pictures, almost all his important pictures, are intended to convey to their spectator the actual appearance of some scene as it happened, or as it might have happened, in the past. His two scenes from Shakespeare are very much as Shakespeare may have imagined them to himself. His painting of the early Christians was meant to be faithfully historical. He went in peril of robbers to Oosdoom on the shore of the Dead Sea, in order to paint the beautiful background of "The Scape-goat." But there are three pictures in especial, "Christ among the Doctors," "The Finding of Christ in the Temple," and "The Shadow of Death," which are peculiarly characteristic of his historical realism, and which are more typical of his art than either "The Lady of Shalott," or "The Light of the World."

I will not speak here of their colour, which is sometimes glaring, or of their texture, which is sometimes woolly. Their principal appeal is to the intellect, and it is by that rather than

by the eye that they must be judged. They aim at presenting three incidents in the life of Christ,—two of them historical, the third possible and marked by the beauty of its idea—with all the wealth of detail with which they happened or might have happened, with the exact costumes such as were worn, with the nearest possible approach to that type of face and figure which we suppose to have existed in Judæa in the first century, in the midst of native architecture and lit up by the true Syrian sunshine. They tell us what at all events we may suppose to be the exact truth. They are, in Mr. Hunt's own words, attempts to make a story live as history.

We may easily admit that all this is very educative, very historical, very scientific, if you like; but is it in any sense of the words, good art? Does it make the story live? Is there not rather reason for saying that all this strange material detail tends rather to kill the story than to make it live?

For one thing, Mr. Hunt's humanistic treatment of Christ, painting him as an ordinary man among ordinary men, has an interest which in itself is painful. He himself wrote:

Some painters . . . do not appear to have considered the gulf between the common men and women to be found in a degraded society and the great leaders of thought whose lives were passed in an atmosphere of heavenly communion. . . . The representation of uninspired peasants of this day will not satisfy the just thinker as the presentment of the leaders of men who are worshipped and loved.

These are excellent words; but why, then, were they not acted on? We are told that the head and figure of Christ in "The Shadow of Death" were painted from a servant whom Mr. Hunt met by chance in the lanes of Bethlehem. No doubt he was for his class "a man of singularly noble form and beauty of expression," but Mr. Hunt's own reasoning is conclusive against his choice of models. We have just the same feeling about the two other representations of Christ. The subject is one which on the principle of realism is better left alone. Is it not strange that Mr. Hunt should also have painted "The Light of the World," and should have deserted that method for this?

But we may detect a deficiency which is in no wise connected with this especial objection. It is clear that if the method of historical realism has any artistic value, that value should remain constant for all epochs and countries. It should not increase as the period grows more familiar, or diminish as the country

becomes more unknown. This, however, is the case with historical realism. As realism is applied to objects further and further away from us, so the representation of these objects becomes more and more scientific, less and less artistic. To all those who are not thoroughly familiar with Eastern life, Mr. Hunt's accuracy of costume, his correctness of type, his truth of atmosphere, are simply so many hindrances to the proper understanding of his story. They distract the attention. The spectator's imagination is not aroused, but suppressed. His emotions are those of wonder, not those of sympathy. He finds all the details which assign particular and individual character to the scene emphasised and brought prominently forward. Those strange peculiarities of dress, those racial oddities, and architectural effects, all tend to remove the scene from our ordinary conceptions of life. Yet those ordinary conceptions are the only ones with which we associate vivid, poignant reality. But what is it that the historical realist has realised and expressed? The sense of that wonderful life which is common to us with all the past ages, and by virtue of which we are able to enter into and comprehend the past? No, but all those points of difference which separate us from the scene he paints. These are what he forces upon us, these are what quench the spirit of comprehension in us. Each strange detail that he gives us makes our task more difficult, and burdens our imagination more heavily. We have no mental equivalent by which to translate the material facts into terms of emotion. Such pictures remain something seen with the physical but not with the spiritual eye. Everything tells us that those men were wholly different from ourselves. We could only imagine their life by casting off our own with all its sense of reality. We are lost, we have no place in that unknown assembly. We look on it much as some centurion from the castle of Antonia might have looked on the actual scene, and with as little understanding as he. It is alien to us. It is the dead body of a vanished world. It is no more vivid and keen with life than the scientific reconstruction of some prehistoric animal.

It is thus that historical realism surrenders the substance for the shadow, bringing back the corpse of the past but unable to animate it. Even if we succeeded in casting ourselves back those twenty centuries, would it be possible to imagine its life, to know its emotions, to live in it? Indeed, it may only be revived by the light of our own life; it can only be rekindled with the



help of our common humanity. But all this is sedulously avoided by the method we are considering ; and so we are offered nothing living and organic, nothing that imitates life, nothing but a sepulchral monument. The artist leads us into some unlit, Cimmerian land. The art which only does this is fitly described as the art of the unreal.

One can hardly forbear contrasting these scriptural paintings of Mr. Holman Hunt's with his "Hireling Shepherd," that picture equally realistic but far more effective. Even that is not a picture wholly pleasant to look at. You feel repulsion and disgust as you gaze at the kneeling shepherd and the girl. But what a true reading they give of the human animal ! How convincing, how real is their symbolism ! If they are repulsive, that is because they were meant to be so. They are no more intended to be beautiful or attractive than Hogarth's Thomas Idle. Their art is more than realistic ; it is real, though not on the highest plane of art. It excites the imagination. You enter into it. It is as though you had been there and seen that heavy-jowled, sensual-looking shepherd. It is not a dream but something true. Indeed, realism only does not obscure the vital truth when it is applied to familiar things ; exact material representation only does not deaden the fancy when it conveys things deeply associated with ourselves.

Thus we see that on the one side, its realistic side, Pre-Raphaelitism justifies the definition which I have ventured to give of it ; on its other side, this is still more obviously the case. Mr. Holman Hunt at all events professed to give us the exact image of a form of life ; if his method was unsuccessful, still we owe him thanks for the attempt, and if his biblical pictures are not illuminating as art, still they have an educative, scientific value. But Rossetti never looked at life at all. We know his fantastic medievalism, with its ladies whose only natural function was to utter magic incantations, and its knights who could never have borne the weight of armour. He was one of those who are invincibly given to run away from life, and that, one fancies, must be his chief virtue in the eyes of many of his admirers ; he was gifted with an astonishingly rich and sensuous imagination, and thus his art portrayed a world which has no conceivable relation with our own. From an entirely opposite direction, therefore, he came also to produce, after his own manner, another form of the art of the unreal.

In Mr. Hunt's autobiography we find more than one interesting illustration of Rossetti's dislike and impatience of the real world. For instance, when they went down to Sevenoaks together on a painting excursion, we read :

I ran up occasionally to see him, and found him nearly always engaged in a mortal quarrel with a particular leaf which would perversely shake about and get torn off its branch when he was half-way in its representation. Having been served thus repeatedly, he would put up with no more of such treatment, and (would stalk) back to the lodgings to write and to try designs.

And again, of Rossetti's portraits :

Rossetti's tendency then in sketching a face was to convert the features of his sitter to his favourite ideal type, and if he finished on these lines, the drawing was extremely charming, but you had to make believe a good deal to see the likeness, while if the sitter's features would not lend themselves to the pre-ordained form, he, when time allowed, went through a stage of reluctant twisting of lines and quantities to make the drawing satisfactory.

This little notice satisfactorily explains a notion which Mr. William Rossetti was at some pains to try to destroy, that his brother only painted from a single model. The truth is that the models did not make very much difference to him ; they were not used as models, but as lay-figures.

And his treatment of the past was in exact accordance with his treatment of nature, or of living men and women. His conception of life was altogether lacking in vitality. He walked through life like one dreaming, and for the past he was content to take other men's dreams and refine on them. His conception of the medieval world was founded on Keats and Tennyson, and to them he added the Dantesque gloom and love of allegory and abstraction. Out of these he compounded a new world all his own, where tall forms in graceful drapery moved to the doleful sounds of lute and clavicithern. The boat which carries us to Mr. Hunt's dead and buried world is unaccustomed to the pressure of living feet ; and as we pass across the nine-fold stream its thick waters ooze in and rise over our feet ; yet, paying our fee, we do reach his pale land of departed spirits. But no living form ever visited the world whither Rossetti is the ferryman of souls. The one was real once, and only fails to be so now because the literalness with which it is offered us forms an

unknown language ; Rossetti's world never was and never could be real.

Mr. Holman Hunt's unreality lay, we saw, in the exaggeration and false emphasis with which he showed us the differences between our world and one of long ago. Rossetti's method equally displays the result of the predominance of analysis over synthesis. He, too, exaggerates what cannot be exaggerated without destroying all sense of reality. He, too, forces the differences of things upon us, not in this case between the past and the present, but between man and man. By straining after the materiality of the vanished world, Mr. Hunt destroys the reality of the past ; by suggesting that the world of the artist is an entirely different world from ours, Rossetti would destroy the reality of the present.

"The world which we see," said d'Annunzio in one of his novels, "is a magnificent gift freely given by the few to the many, by freemen to slaves, by those who think and feel to those who must labour." So long as art is not abused his words are wise and true. To a very large extent we do look at the world through the artist's eyes, and we owe all gratitude to the great spirits who have done infinitely much to show us the truth and magnificence of life. But we do not learn from the poets and sculptors of Greece and Rome that the realities of life are negligible trifles ; the student of Dante and Shakespeare finds somehow that his opinion of our mortal state has been raised and ennobled, not debased, by his converse with them ; Milton and Goethe have a great deal to tell us concerning the possible beauty and dignity of the human life. By such men our sense of reality and responsibility is confirmed and strengthened. They do not teach us to look askance upon the commonplace of life, but by their continuous synthesis they show more and more plainly the unity of all things.

Art, at its highest, is tonic, but Rossetti's art is an anodyne. So far from fitting us for the difficulty and sternness which have been common to existence through the whole term of history, it beckons us into an enchanted palace, and from the time of the three Calenders onwards those who have entered enchanted palaces have usually regretted it.

On both sides therefore we find that Pre-Raphaelitism has produced what we can only describe as the art of the unreal. Whatever may be the talents of the Brothers, and it is impossible to

deny that both Rossetti and Mr. Holman Hunt are men of exceeding talent, we must in candour admit that they have not put their talents to the best use. Both the one and the other turned away, though in very different directions, from the world of present realities. Both the one and the other have built their respective houses upon the sand.

Consider for one moment how different a method other, greater men than these have pursued. We have been considering the art of the unreal; compare it with the art of the real. This is no idle question of realism and idealism; it goes down further to the root of art than that. It is the question between the vital art which lives and the anæmic art which passes away and is forgotten. Every great artist, every great poet, has looked back to the past; but what have they all seen there? Anything totally inconsistent with the life they knew? I do not think we can hesitate in answering the question. They filled the dead forms with their own abundant life. Hamlet appeared in the Elizabethan ruff and doublet. The citizens of ancient Rome were made to use the language of the Bank Side and the Cheap. Corneille gave the Cid the air of a stormy noble of the Fronde. Veronese painted his family kneeling before the living Virgin.

We condemn this confusion of past and present; but consider the sentiment on which it rests, and ask yourself whether it be not preferable, with all its anachronism and all its homeliness, to the most precise accuracy and the most elusive poetry. It contains a frank acceptance of contemporary life. It betrays no suggestion that the things of every-day are vulgar or unpoetical. It implicitly teaches the unity of the race, in spite of its alterations and developments. It tells us in effect that changes of dress and habit and expression are of little moment compared with the vast fund of common humanity which remains untouched. The same heart beats in our breast, is stirred by the same passions and desires, is filled by the same joys and broken by the same griefs, in every period of civilisation.

How profoundly is art affected by this belief and all that it involves! It liberates beauty and romance from the strange and the unfamiliar prison where it resides in these days. Men needed not to seek their poetry on desolate mountain tops or in the ruins of old cities. The charm of artist and poet did not lie in the mere accessories of their thought, in fanciful decoration or swelling

language, but in their thought itself, in their emotion, in their earnestness.

We however, and it is thus that the Pre-Raphaelites speak for a wider circle than their own, seem afraid of the familiar. We forget that if we cannot see any poetry in actual life, it is nothing but illusion to suppose that we can see any in the world of chivalry, or in the classical world, or in the world of mere imagination. Could we but persuade ourselves, life is still as full as ever of poetry and mystery and terrifying beauty. The tawdry coverings with which men decorate themselves can neither impair nor increase the dignity of life.

Yet we turn away from it. Sometimes one would almost think that the only real feeling with which the contemplation of real life inspires us is a feeling of disgust and discontent,—discontent with life as it is, but that means, one fears, with life as it has always been. If it meant only discontent with our present remediable ills, it would be active and reforming, not suffering and pessimistic. This is the spirit with which we turn to the past and ask artists and poets to give us, not its real life (that would remind us too much of our own), but its material details, its setting and adornment. Or else we ask for a dream in which to lose ourselves. As one of our own modern poets has said,

We are born old,  
Old in the heart and older in the brain,  
Hunters of shadows.

That is unhappily the character of many who pretend to a love of poetry and art. They drink of the cup of Circe-like imagination, but neglect to bind her to reality, as Ulysses bound her with an oath, that she may do no hurt. For art and literature based on sane principles these men seem to care little. But however men may be delighted with the art of the unreal, we may be assured that it has very little permanence. Its admirers must either reach a better frame of mind, or they will discover that life has no room for them. It is not possible for such art to endure. And it is not hard to remember that although only one page of the book of life is open at a time, and we needs must infer the other pages from the only one which we can decipher, yet that the lessons and warnings on every page are much the same.

H. BRUCE DODWELL

## A NEW ENDOR

THE counterpart of Endor is not very difficult to find. Incantations, though of the mild modern sort, are now as common in the West as they were in the East in the days of King Saul ; a singular fact arising from that greater knowledge which proves to be more dangerous than the little knowledge of antiquity and the Middle Ages. The marvels of X-rays and of wireless telegraphy are answerable for much of this paradoxical reaction ; it seems to be taken for granted that these material wonders justify the wildest supernatural theories. Telepathy, as expounded by public and private professors, may be all so much rubbish (some of us think it is) but to many minds it is the natural sequence of Marconi's discovery ; and so with all the rest. If we can see a penny through a purse, why should we not be able to see the departed come through the door ? The reasoning is ridiculously faulty, but the inference is nevertheless widely entertained by those who know no logic and could not use it if they did.

In the old times people knew less but were far more certain of the little they did know. We now drift rudderless on an ocean of knowledge, asking hopelessly what is the meaning of it all, whence do we come and where do we go ? But from king to peasant not a man asked such questions in the Middle Ages. They knew better. They were absolutely certain of three things of which we seem to know next to nothing now. There was this present life to begin with, not a maze of riddles and puzzles as it is to us, but an easily understood existence of hard blows, hard eating, and hard drinking, within the fifty miles or so which represented the world to them. Then followed the life to come in heaven or hell. It never occurred to them to argue that last unpleasantness away ; they would as soon have dreamt of doubting the iron they stood up in. The Devil's



pitchfork was as absolute an entity to them as their own agricultural implements. When they saw the arch-enemy himself, as they frequently did, they were never astonished, for why should they not see him? He frightened them, that was all. He frightened them once to good purpose indeed, when against all rules and precedents he went to church, a risk which, to our knowledge, he never ran before or since. On Sunday, October 21st, 1638, he entered the parish church of Widdecombe in Devon and dragged therefrom a boy who was asleep, disappearing in a sudden and violent thunderstorm. Of his identity there could be no doubt, for, asking his way at a roadside inn, he drank a glass of ale which hissed and spluttered down his throat. Of all the discrepancies of this well-attested case the good folk of the seventeenth century took no heed; the only point in dispute was this: he evidently did not know his way to Widdecombe, and it could not therefore be his home, as was too often and too recklessly asserted by the enemies of Devon,—their neighbours of Cornwall, to wit.

As a properly complicated theological argument this contradiction held the field for a long time, on stormy nights and on desolate moors where even the Devil is better than nothing in the way of visitors from the outer world; but before laughing too much at such quaint survivals of ancient faith, we should first of all try to determine whether belief in the Devil can be rightly described as superstition. As a fundamental part of Christianity, the spirit of evil and its manifestations can never be ranked with pixies, fairies, hobgoblins, and the minor demons that lurk under ladders, between crossed knives, and in the salt that is spilt. There is all the difference in the world between an orthodox belief for which our ancestors would have gone to the stake, and local traditions for which old women were pricked with pins or ducked in the pond.

It is true that in the gospel according to Sir Oliver Lodge the Devil is completely ignored, but in the older gospels the doctrine of his material existence and appearance is explicitly taught, and though it is not probable that he would appear to-day, say in a newspaper office in Fleet Street, to fly away with some too wide-awake editor, we cannot disprove the possibility of such an event from a religious point of view. If doubt is born within us, it is not because we are inclined to disbelief; it is because certain editors are still in their editorial chairs.

We have to confess, however, that Sir Oliver is not the only man for whom the arch-fiend has no more terrors. In this London of ours with its six millions of people, fairly representative of civilised mankind, there are dozens and dozens of haunted houses still ; but is there not one of the six millions, man, woman, or child, who ever by any chance hits upon the possibility of the Devil haunting the house ? In the country there is a vast number of ancient abbeys and granges haunted by white ladies, crooked ghosts, shadowy hounds, or what not ; but even in the country the Devil is as dead as Pan, and we are not a whit the better for it. Indeed it is a real loss. There was something virile and vigorous in the superstitions of the Middle Ages, widely differing from the mawkish pseudo-scientific faith of those who now sit round tables, attend *séances*, look sheepishly at one another and whisper that "there must be something in it." They were stronger men who saw the Devil ; Luther threw his ink-pot at him, for one.

The ordinary or common ghost stood, and stands, on another footing altogether. For one thing his intentions are not necessarily unfriendly ; if he frightens us it is not his fault, for there cannot be a more harmless thing on earth. All about Redruth, when the country people see a ghost they say "Numny Dumny" and it goes away. "It is not at all necessary," says a humorous native of the delectable duchy, "to know what is meant by those words of dread ; the ghost knows, which is quite enough." If our fathers had not been so woefully ignorant of ponderables and imponderables, of electrons and dynamics, they would have known how pitifully helpless even the most vindictive ghost must be when he comes to try what he can do. Of this we are now so certain that we go to the other extreme and encourage them as much as we can. Curiously enough, if a census were possible, it might be found that we are quite as unanimous in believing in ghosts as our forefathers were in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, with a notable difference, however. The ghost of yesterday is not the ghost of to-day. Our predecessors fainted or ran away when they saw one ; if a necessitous necromancer tried to raise one, for a paltry fee which no respectable conjurer would now look at, they promptly burned him or put him on the rack. Now we are most anxious to see them ; we coax them in all sorts of ways to come and be investigated, to show what they are made of, or what they can

do. A duly authenticated spirit holding the Psychological Society's certificate, a reasonable, reliable spirit in short, willing to appear before the most inquisitive committee, would, commercially speaking, be worth its weight,—in gold we were about to say, but that would not be much. He or she, for we do not know if they retain their sex, would have an advance agent, and make the tour of the world.

A necromancer, or call him a spiritualist or a thought-reader, for they are all one, is now a prosperous gentleman, not so picturesque as his predecessors in office but a good deal smarter, a Merlin in evening dress, with a motor-car waiting for him at the door, and a bag of tricks in place of the stuffed crocodile. Knowing a little, a very little more of the mysteries of nature, with that blessed letter X and its rays before our eyes, we hardly dare laugh at him ; we even think, privately, that we might do worse than choose this once risky calling for our boys, as a recognised, well-paid profession, already with a literature and a review of its own, and therefore highly respectable: But in the essential, do we get any forwarder ? We welcome any new calling, profession, or industry in this overcrowded world, but is this new one of much use ? Do the spirits raised by it tell us even as much as the Sybils of old or as the spirit of Endor ? Not half so much. Mankind is aching with expectancy, waiting tremblingly as before the curtain of the holiest ; we cover the occult fraternity with gold, and what do we hear ? Not a sound, not a whisper ! The result is so ludicrously inadequate that we must venture to suppose that we are on the wrong track. Do we not, with every new discovery in science or psychology, get deeper in the bog ? Are we not, with all respect, following a will-o'-the-wisp ? The process is such a curiously negative one. One after another we shed our superstitions, as a snake sheds its skin, and, also like it, growing new ones continually. What is there to choose between the familiar spirit raised at Endor and the far too familiar ones that speak inanities in the tongue of the medium, except a gradual lowering of spiritual dignity and standing ? Saul did not actually see Samuel,—there was this hitch then as there is now—but the powerful Eastern Chief, prone on the ground in an agony of superstitious fear, was a sad and solemn figure, free from any vestige of ridicule ; he at least heard no tambourine, though the instrument is of untold antiquity, and was well known in his days. In our familiarity

with the spirit world, we have lost all sense of the dread sublimity of the unknown, and have fallen to a depth of vulgarity only equalled in the practices of a negro Obi man.

If to the editors and readers of *THE OCCULT REVIEW* and kindred publications, (we are offered to-day, incredible as it may seem, *THE BLACK PULLET, OR THE SECRET OF THE ANCIENT SAGE OF THE PYRAMIDS, WITH THE VARIATIONS OF THE BLACK SCREECH-OWL* and *THE MAGIC RITUAL OF THE SANCTUM REGNUM, INTERPRETED BY THE TAROT TRUMPS*,) if to the thousands of weak-minded people whose lives and actions are ruled by the spectral voices of dead and gone husbands and wives, as we learn but too frequently from the papers, we add fashionable thought-readers, neo-Buddhists, astrologers, and almanac-makers, the crystal-gazers, the palmists of Bond Street, the vulgar fortune-tellers of Soho, the dreamers of dreams, we reach a total of black, concrete superstition which for the twentieth century must certainly be called astounding. Who will ever sweep out this stable? Royal Commissions or police regulations may deal with betting or drink, but this evil was already difficult to control in Saul's time, and it is within the bounds of reasonable probability that we may become more and more credulous as civilisation advances. Cheats will always be on the look-out for new discoveries to turn into some form of esoteric swindle; there would have been no Balsamo, no Necklace Affair, had Galvani and Volta not discovered galvanism; without the hypnotism of the doctors we should have had no thought-readers, and many shillings would not have changed hands. The ground is well prepared by the explaining away of all old faiths and beliefs, for believe in something we must, nature abhorring a vacuum, even in an empty head.

It must in fairness be added that all men have not always considered it as an evil. It has a fascination all its own and is to a certain extent harmless, if decidedly discreditable to a community which vaunts itself highly civilised. It is to-day as fashionable as bridge, and a drastic definition in modern language of what rogues and vagabonds meant in old days is hardly to be expected. The evil has in turn been countenanced and frowned upon in high places. Saul began by rooting it out and ended by personally making use of it. In the year 1690 Queen Mary went in disguise to consult a celebrated female soothsayer called Mrs. Wise. The woman recognised the Queen and for fear of

making mistakes would not open her mouth ; when Dutch William heard of it, he opened his, and gave his wife a public scolding which historians say she took very meekly. Superstition might perhaps have been excused in a Stuart, a doomed race which carried their fate written on their features ; but equally of course it could find no toleration in a Calvinistic prince hailing from a country which has always been the least superstitious in Europe. But some years before this the whole British House of Commons showed a surprising leaning towards popular error when they summoned the astrologer Lilly to appear before them, not as a culprit but as a valued adviser. As he himself said, " It was Mr. Lilly here and Mr. Lilly there " ; they treated him with the greatest courtesy, anxious to know, through him and the stars, who it was that set fire to the City. He frankly told the members that he could find no reason to doubt the truth of what the stars declared, namely, that it was an accident, and nothing more. The House warmly thanked the astrologer, and proceeded to more sensible business.

Yet there was some excuse for this. Of all modes of divination astrology is really the most respectable, and it still has adherents to-day among well-informed people. Sorcerers, magicians, and wizards were cheats, but astrologers were not. This science is now proved to be wrong, which unfortunately often happens to science at one period or another, the wisdom of to-day being frequently the foolishness of to-morrow ; but it was a science with clearly defined rules, not practised in secret fashion with intent to deceive. You could, you can now, buy the text-books and grammar for a few shillings, and every man may be his own prophet. A respectable star-gazer was as willing as Mr. Maskelyne is to " show you how it was done." In fact Zadkiel (for there really was one), when he edited a new edition of Lilly's Grammar, published the horoscope of the Duke of Wellington, showing in full astronomical detail how such a nativity was calculated from the position of the heavenly bodies at the hour of the hero's birth. The thing can be followed by anyone with a clear head and a little patience, and the Duke's career so startlingly verified the truth of the horoscope that we can hardly wonder at the hold this pseudo-science once had on the popular mind. Of course this singular fact was published after his death.

What are we to say, then, to a fact which goes straight against

the teaching and conviction of sensible men of all ages? If there be one theory which seemed bound to find its fulfilment in practice, it is that the spread of education is the only cure for superstition, and we see it is nothing of the sort. In this most highly civilised capital of the world it is as rampant in the twentieth as it was in the sixteenth century. We may change the names and objects: there is more secrecy in one way and more publicity in another; but the thing remains the same. Then, ladies of high standing went to soothsayers disguised as applewomen with market-baskets on their arms, and when the stars proved unpropitious they fell into hysterics, and jewelled high-heeled shoes beating a tattoo on the floor spoiled a disguise which was rarely successful. Now, the ladies stop at home and milliners call with boxes lettered in gold *Madame So-and-So, Modiste*; and when the boudoir-door is shut the cards are produced that are to reveal the future. *Séances* of spiritism in public take the place of incantations in secret, but the intentions are as like as two peas. We have nothing to say against ladders and knives and salt, strangers in tea, Fridays and the right foot. Education has little to do with these harmless twists of the mind against which the sanest people are not always entirely proof: such trifles will never upset anyone's mental balance; but the occult rubbish which is now so fashionable is a more positive danger to the community.

We should be sorry to repeat the mistake of Tenterden Steeple, and do not wish to hint at any connection between telepathy, or thought-reading, and the alarming growth of lunacy in the United Kingdom, though it is certain that these practices do not tend towards emptying the asylums. If it were not that praises of the good old times are so much at a discount, we could wish to feel our feet once more on firm ground as our forefathers did, and could follow King Saul in his saner moments by getting rid of the occult business root and branch. We can never know what that dense unshaken faith of theirs felt like. The last few generations have been born and bred in an atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty (the result and the disadvantage of knowing too much) which has tinged all our thoughts, and has to a certain extent taken the backbone out of us. To regain that solid ground, we would willingly make room again for a belief in the medieval Devil if it could be done on no other terms.

MARCUS REED



## THE SOUL OF OUR SUBURB

It is with a proper reticence that one shrinks from the baring of a soul, with a certain trepidation that one sets upon paper any aspects of its development. For the soul of our suburb is both real and very desperately in earnest ; and it has almost found itself. Four years have gone to its making, four pregnant years, that have called into being a thousand new emotions, a thousand dauntless aspirations. Four years ago this suburb of ours was but the merest red-brick tag, strung out along a railway leading to a place that shall be nameless. It was a raw and unfledged youngling, that lolled in its shirt-sleeves and talked across garden-walls, that kept poultry in its back-yards and lodgers in its upper chambers. It was intensely democratic ; and indeed it still remains so, — across the line. But then it is hardly necessary to remark that, in common with all railway lines, this one is extremely unmistakable, and it is upon this side of it that our suburb has really evolved. Here, from its former waste, from its jungle of dusty grass and half-made roads, it has grown to its present high estate. Four years ago it was not ; to-day it is magnificent in an esplanade and desirable residential properties. It possesses at least a dozen houses of real architectural merit : it owns a lawn-tennis court ; and one can admit, too, without undue pride, that it has already outgrown very many of its earlier faults, still, alas, so visible across the line.

As a community we seldom mix, in the social sense, with our immediate ancestors. The line is our rubicon. The dwellers beyond it work for wages ; the dwellers upon this side labour for salaries. The dwellers upon the other side herd genially in workmen's trains at extraordinarily nominal fares ; the dwellers upon this side have season tickets, and go townwards with newspapers. The gulf therefore is great, and not crossed with impunity.

Even after four years one has come to wonder whether the first clerk, who took his forty-pound house on the only side of the line worth considering, felt himself to be something of a pioneer. Possibly he did, but it is a little hard to realise that there can ever have been a first. There are now so many. From a thousand City offices they return to us night by night, their cuffs in paper, and the latest news upon their lips. To a thousand City offices they hurry from us each morning, their pipes in their mouths, and their eyes fixed earnestly upon the neighbouring clocks. One likes to emphasise their earnestness, for, though they do not spend much time with us, they are responsible for the atmosphere that pervades the place. The days of our rollicking coatless youth are over ; we have grown earnest, though we are still young ; for most of these newcomers are young, and the majority have been married but a year or two. They take themselves with enormous seriousness, and the desire to rise dominates them all.

These represent the second stage in our suburban development ; but already in their wake has come the third, the man of leisure. He is, at present, of the retired description, retired from the commerce that the youngsters still pursue, retired upon that competence which can ensure at least one servant and a proportionate distinction. By day he moves sedately through our deserted streets, a rare figure, but recruiting comrades. At even-time he is lost in the younger army that has returned from its duties. These one meets in their leisure hours, pale of face, frock-coated, with caps of tweed or hats of straw. One sees them examining their garden-beds or reading their evening newspapers. They have conferred distinction on our suburb : they have lifted our soul from the vulgar mire ; and yet, how unerringly, one reflects, would the youth from Oxford class them as *bounders*. And yet again, what good fellows they are, and how they cleave with both hands to their ideals of respectability. They would sooner die than go hatless ; and how magnificently they are seconded (or led perhaps ?) by their wives.

It has been our rare privilege to be the witness of a suburban At-home, where all things were done in the completest fashion of a correct society. Nobody was introduced, for example, and the whole air of the little drawing-room was electric with social appraisings. One could tell at a glance that books upon

etiquette were not only present, but had been diligently studied in the various houses from which these guests had assembled. And never surely was the half-extended hand more sternly quenched by the frigid bow, or the lady so thoroughly overwhelmed who would take a lump of sugar in her fingers ; and only once might one have heard an *h* drop in a silence that could be felt. Some friends, too, drove up during the afternoon in a hired landau ; and this vehicle, as it waited outside, lifted us all to the best that was in us. Presently some husbands dropped in, dressed for the occasion since early morning in the pink of suburban wardrobes, their tongues glib with the jokes of last week's PUNCH, and all manner of debonair ways to chide the ladies for their small appetites ; one never eats more than two cucumber sandwiches at an At-home in our suburb. Hard, too, will it be to forget the hushed exaltation that was ours when a lady at the piano informed us musically that it was morn. Yet our applause was refined and chastened, and none of us referred to the rehearsals of this ballad that had made at least one of our streets melodious for a fortnight past.

From all this it will be gathered that our suburb has been busy in rounding itself to maturity ; and indeed we have already thrown aside the greater part of our earlier *gaucheries*. But the climax was only reached last week, and we are now hall-marked in very truth. A colonel has come to live in our midst ; an army colonel, so we casually refer to him in our conversations with one another. Few of us have spoken with him : he only came on Wednesday ; but the postman has left letters at his door, and the neighbours have seen an elderly warrior wandering round the garden. Does he guess, one wonders, in how real a sense he has become the king of all surveys ? Is he aware how infinitely more precious than rubies his visiting-cards will so shortly be, how for weeks, nay years, to come they will dominate the surrounding card-trays ? For in the card-trays of our suburb the more substantial names have a marvellous faculty of rising to the top, despite the ignorant efforts of our servants to cover them up with later comers, Browns and Smiths and persons of lesser account. But a dean or a colonel will top them all. Year in, year out, he will repose there in an obvious supremacy. His call may have been made ten years, or more, ago and in another place than this ; it may never have been repeated ; it may indeed, if the truth be told, never have been made at all, and his

card be merely the appendage of a wedding-present. But what of such slight considerations as these? He is a dean and he will remain.

"Ah, snobbishness," one can almost hear an enlightened reader exclaim, "Ah, glorious Anglo-Saxon snobbishness, how great thou art, and how invariably thou prevailest!" One can almost hear him sighing; but that is only because we have forgotten to mention the suburban babies. Behold then, upon a cloudless summer evening, these earnest young fathers and these aspiring young mothers paying homage to a thousand perambulators. It is a tender sight, and, perceiving it, one imagines that, for this little moment, the long hours in the City and the social emulations of the tea-table have perhaps been forgotten; that even the colonel himself may have faded into a comparative insignificance. For in reality it is these small atoms of plump humanity that are the lords dominant of our suburb, the last court of appeal, and the very mainspring of all its strivings. At any rate it is a comforting thought. God bless them!

H. H. BASHFORD

## ON THE LAND IN NEW ZEALAND

WITH a population of under one million New Zealand has four large and rapidly growing cities where more than a quarter of her people live. Auckland comes first with 82,000; then follow Christchurch with 67,000 and Dunedin with 56,000 inhabitants; Wellington, the seat of government, which is increasing faster than the rest, has, according to the year-book of 1906, already 63,000. After these, at a long interval, come Invercargill with 11,500, Napier with 9,600, Wanganui with 8,000. The census of 1906 shows a startling increase in the urban population, although the Government policy has been vigorously directed towards getting the people on to the land.

Passing over these few centres of population, we come to what in the old country would be called villages. Townships in name, they often hold only a few hundred inhabitants, who may, from any hygienic or educational standpoint, be reckoned as country-bred. Even the large towns have a country-like appearance, with green trees growing in them, and green hills or plains round about them; and they have, in fact, such a marked provincial flavour, these green and be-flowered cities, that travellers, who can enjoy English provincial life, take to them very kindly.

Yet to the Englishman and Englishwoman who emigrate what they are or are not is a matter of small importance, inasmuch as there is no place for him in any town, or for her unless she is a domestic servant. New Zealand's social problems are much the same as England's, and that is what makes them so interesting a study; but they are still of manageable size, and sometimes they are of a different colour. The problem of the unemployed already exists in the towns; but in New Zealand, as in England, there is work for all those who will go out on the land to seek it. It cannot be too widely known that

there is no demand in New Zealand for immigrant townsmen. A few skilled artisans and mechanics find town-work, though not at all times or easily ; and generally speaking the man or woman who can and will do rough manual labour finds some sort of employment everywhere, and as there is a minimum wage, below which no person may be legally employed, any kind of regular work means a maintenance. But for clerks and the like there is no opening. It is true that many of the big offices import men, and it is even surprising to see in New Zealand so many Englishmen who have come out to fill good posts which, one would have thought, the New Zealanders would have themselves contrived to fill ; but these are men selected for special capacity, imported to do special work, and they have nothing in common with the young man who arrives unheralded, with white hands, a black coat, and no particular qualifications.

What New Zealand wants is the country-bred man in the prime of life, who understands agriculture or has a trade and is willing steadily to pursue it, and who has saved or inherited capital. For him, with a capital not less than £50, New Zealand is willing to pay £10 on the passage-money. It is little enough. Such a man costs and is worth a good deal more than £10 to the country that reared him ; and while we do not grudge to our Colonies the best that we have, it is permissible to point out that we can make good use of such men at home. We have not nearly enough of them. In many parts of England, if not in all, such men have an assured future. Not of these are the unemployed or the unemployable fashioned.

On the other hand, it must in fairness be owned that many a man or woman makes a useful Colonist who is no good for country-work in England. At home it is impossible to apply compulsion, and there are many who will steadily pursue agriculture, and will at length learn to be happy in it, only when for the first time in their lives they find themselves unable to throw it up and go in search of some more entrancing occupation and higher wages at a moment's notice. In England, for such as these, no district can be far enough from a town. Its sounds are perpetually in their ears, its lights dazzle them, their hands drop from the plough-handles, and they wander away. In New Zealand the towns are few and far off, and even in their midst the lights are not extremely dazzling nor the sounds very gay. Moreover, a man who has come across the ocean to a new country has



burned his boats on landing. He had stuff enough in him to come or he would not be there, and, over-impulsive and impatient though he may be, he is rarely of the sort that will easily go back and acknowledge failure. He suffers hardships such as he never dreamed of in an old settled country, and at first a passion of home-sickness rends his heart; but others are suffering likewise, and he cannot get away, and he does not see anyone else living in luxury, which to some men means a great saving of mental distress. That may very likely mean that he has got to a corner of the world where nobody who had any choice in the matter would stay. But there he is, on the land, twenty, thirty, forty miles from the nearest railway station, and as the trains run at fifteen miles an hour, it is a long day's journey from there to the coast, and thousands of miles of ocean divide the coast-towns from home. He is indeed in a labour-colony, where strong compulsion is exercised in restraint of free movement; and probably it is just what was wanted to make a man of him.

As nothing in Europe astonishes the New Zealander so much as the crowds, so nothing here is so surprising to the Englishman as the vast stretches of uninhabited land. Even the tourist on the coach-roads may easily travel twenty miles without passing a single house. On the road leading to one of the most popular resorts of the North Island, along fifty miles of highway there is but one small inn where the horses are changed, and one Maori village with a solitary white teacher for its school. The rest is scrub or swamp where wild horses roam, or cleared bush where blackened stumps still stand, or fern-land with patches of rough pasture. And to reach the far-famed lakes of the South Island, beautiful enough when they are reached, the coach toils for two whole days through inches of dust or mud, according to the season, dragging its slow way past miles of seeming desert, where even the yellow tussock-grass is supplanted by thistles or by patches of green lichen resembling nothing so much as verdigris. In New Zealand they appraise land by the number of sheep it will carry, and this is five or six acres to a sheep, and a merino sheep into the bargain. The driver, as he passes, flings out letter-bags at the little wayside post-offices, or tucks them into wooden boxes perched by the highway. In this way the post is delivered twice, or possibly thrice, a week in summer, and once in winter. But this

is along the coach-roads ; any map will show how few they are, and even they are often impassable for wheeled traffic in winter. Then the post-cart, sunk to its axles, lumbers along at the rate of two miles an hour, or the postman rides, in mud up to his horse's girths, and those who have business abroad do likewise, or wait at home for better weather. Luckily in no part of New Zealand are the winters so long and so severe as in England ; but metal for road-making is scarce in New Zealand, and labour is scarcer and dearer. When one thinks of all that has been done, and of the fifty years or so that it has been done in, the wonder is, not that the roads are bad, but that there are so many roads of any kind.

The newcomer, however, does not think of that. Probably he knows nothing of the early history of the land he proposes to adopt. When he turned his back on England it never occurred to him that there the loneliest farm in the most remote district is in the centre of a crowd as compared with many of the isolated settlements where he may easily find himself. To be only eight or ten miles from the nearest shop, or from any sort of a church, is to be a fortunate exception. On many big runs, which years of toil have gone to make, all the winter's stores must be housed not later than April, because when the rains come only an ox-dray or a pack-horse can travel along the road to the township, and that with difficulty ; and the store-keepers must bring all their wares from the nearest railway-station or coast-town before the weather breaks, standing out of their money for many months, or else they must suffer the loss of oxen and horses bogged or exhausted with the heavy winter's work. No wonder store-goods are dear. "Four foot deep and four foot wide," is the familiar description of roads in "the roadless North," which has a pre-eminently evil reputation in that way ; but even in the old settlements southwards walking is often out of the question, not only because there is nowhere to go within walking distance, but also because of the roads and the unbridged rivers. Nor is that the worst that can befall, for in many districts even yet there are no roads, only bridle-paths, or foot-tracks ending at the water's edge whence a boat can be rowed to the nearest port of call for coasting steamers.

No sensible man will take up land in a new country until he has looked about him awhile, and any man who can work on the land can get some sort of job ; but it is a great mistake to

suppose that every man who comes out is worth even so much as his food without wages, or that any man can drop into an easy berth near to the port of debarkation. Roughly speaking it may be said that two paths lie before the newcomer (or in Colonial phrase the new chum) ; he may go on a farm as a cadet or as a farm-hand. The price of a cadet is ten shillings a week with his board, lodging, and washing. He may, probably he will, bargain to live with the family, but unless he has come provided with good introductions the chances are against the family being persons of any refinement. Many of the best people do not care to be troubled with cadets, and certainly would not hire one of whom they knew nothing. On most of the big runs all the hired men, cadets included, live down at the men's huts and take their meals in the men's kitchen. The young English cadet, therefore, may find himself with rough farming folk, while he and his master have to do all the work of a small farm between them. He will have plenty of food, for the New Zealand farmer thinks everything of that. No other hardship is comparable in his opinion with scarcity. That his clothing was indifferent to begin with and is now ragged, that his children run barefoot, that his food is unwholesomely monotonous, that his housing would not be passed by the most lenient sanitary inspector, are matters that he does not fret about ; but he talks of Englishmen who do not get mutton three times a day with genuine pity, as befits one who persistently overfeeds himself with meat, and suffers accordingly. The cadet, however, must be prepared to go without sheets, possibly without even a bedstead. Indeed, down at the men's huts wooden shelves with hay on them, resembling nothing so much as the shelves round an apple-chamber, will probably be his sleeping-place and that of the other men. If he is lodged indoors he will be provided with a few sticks of furniture, a bedstead and blankets, but the mistress has to wash the sheets herself, and he is therefore expected to pay for the boons she bestows by extra good nature in lighting fires or washing-up on busy evenings.

With introductions the cadet may find himself among pleasant people and in a really comfortable home ; but his duties will be the same everywhere. He must be ready to turn his hand to anything, and to do all the jobs which require no skill, or which his master has no fancy for. There is no farm-hand beneath the cadet to do the less pleasant parts of a farmer's work ; if there

were, the farm-hand's time would be more valuable than his own. The farm-hand's lowest price is £1 a week and his food, and that is what the cadet comes to when he has learned his business. Meanwhile he milks, feeds the pigs and the dogs, chops the wood, harnesses the horse, and fills up the odds and ends of his time with digging the garden. He does the work of an odd man, the man who at home combines the offices of groom, gardener, and cowman. He also learns something of sheep-work, picks up rough and ready Colonial notions of farming, helps to clear bush and scrub, disabuses himself of many opinions that he brought out ready made, learns to ride or to ride better, and in due time, if he has got it in him, fits himself for taking up land of his own.

Then he wants capital. New Zealand is no country for the emigrant with empty pockets. Certainly there are men, both married and single, who have begun with nothing and made a fortune. It is possible to get on to a dairy-farm, milking on shares, and to make a beginning that way. Some men have saved out of their wages and begun by cattle-dealing on a small scale, and the Government of late has helped poor settlers by employing them at wages to clear the land they are afterwards to occupy, adding the price of their labour to that of the holding. Where there's the will there's the way; but success on these lines means great hardship and heavy toil endured with unusual character or capacity. One hears of wealthy men who began life in New Zealand by living eight years in a hollow tree; one does not hear of the failures so easily. To most Englishmen at all carefully brought up Colonial life seems rough at the best, even if they have some hundreds of pounds to help them over the first difficulties.

Let no emigrant, however, suppose that with money in his pocket he has nothing to do but to choose his ground and pay the price. Travelling through New Zealand on coach or horseback, the casual observer is apt to think that land is to be had for the asking because there are hundreds of square miles not cultivated up to their utmost yielding value; but they are all owned by someone, possibly by the Maoris, who may lease land under certain restrictions, but may not sell except to the Government. There is no land going begging; on the contrary, when Government lands are disposed of, it is usually at a fixed price by ballot, and there may be a hundred men balloting for

the same section. Only one can get it, and among the rest there are tales told of unlucky creatures who have travelled over the islands for years, balloting always, and yet landless at the last.

Private property changes hands often, and the tendency is for holdings to split up, growing smaller as settlement gets closer and cultivation intensifies. But the prices of land are so high, and those of produce, to our notions, are even now so low, that the wonder is how most men make a living, and how so many men make fortunes at farming, as so few do in the older countries. No doubt some of this success is due to laborious days and hard living. The cadet must not expect to live, any more than he must expect to work, as he would among his friends at home. Few things indeed surprise the English visitor more than the apparent lack of correspondence between the way of life and the fortunes of his New Zealand friends,—if he can procure an accurate statement of their fortunes; most often he cannot, and so gets mightily perplexed in his experiences.

It is not only land that is dear. To give a few prices will help to clear up this part of the subject. Dairy-land in the south-west of the North Island is worth £25 to £30, or lets at 25s. and 30s. an acre. At this price it is said that men can make a living only if they employ no paid labour, and a spirited correspondence has been going on in the newspapers on the subject of child-labour on farms, certainly one of the blots on New Zealand civilisation. Farming-land in the same neighbourhood was let at 8s. to 10s. an acre. One quarter-acre section in Wanganui sold for £350 and another for £600. In a smaller town in Taranaki £150 and £200 were quoted. These were none of them in exceptional situations, or in the main street; they were mere building-plots a quarter of an hour's walk from the Post Office. After this £60 for a quarter-acre section a mile out of Tauranga, which is a sedate little town with a good harbour, sounds cheap. Land at £10 and £11 an acre, if it be not in what are known locally as the back blocks, will certainly not be near good markets or a railway-station. And lest it may be thought that these are top prices, there is the huge sum paid last year for a bit of land whereon to enlarge the Wellington Post Office, and for another bit in Queen Street, Auckland,—£400 a foot.

All these prices refer to the North Island, which is chiefly given over to pasture and dairy-work. Some of the best land in the world is in the Canterbury plains, and enormous crops are

raised there. In the extreme north some fruit is grown, and doubtless there will be more. Many thousands of pounds are paid annually for fruit, which New Zealanders could as well grow for themselves, and the Government is promoting fruit-culture in both islands. The difficulty is not a matter of climate or soil, but of transport; it is easier and cheaper to bring fruit from Australia and Fiji and to pay the penny a pound duty than to get it from up-country in New Zealand.

The prices of all products are high now. Wool at the March sales went up to  $12\frac{1}{2}d.$ ; it was at  $6d.$  not so long ago. Sheep are now worth from  $15s.$  to  $25s.$ ; they were down at  $8s.$  and even then farmers contrived to make a living. Mutton sells in the town shops at  $5d.$  a pound for prime joints. Meat is the one food noticeably cheaper than in England. Milk is all taken to the creameries in the dairy-districts, and the farmer gets  $5d.$  a gallon, the skim milk being returned to him. Butter pays well if it sells in London at  $1s.$  a pound, and out of that have to come the cost of freight and packing, and the middlemen's profits. Most of the creameries are closed in the winter, when it is said that the prices of butter in New Zealand are so high that it would pay to fetch a case of forty-eight pounds back from London, rather than to buy by the pound at the local stores. Even in summer  $14d.$  or  $15d.$  is no unusual price to pay in New Zealand.

With all this farming is undoubtedly a trade to live by. Labour is the expensive item, and very little is needed for the style of farming in vogue. Three men on a farm of 2,000 acres, twenty men on a run of 150,000 acres, a man and a lad on two holdings of 1,500 acres rented together, one being bush land half cleared; these are actual instances, and it is strange to reflect that they come from a land where our large English landowners are fiercely denounced, and where the democracy is supposed to be all powerful. Certainly many conditions are accepted peaceably in democratic New Zealand that would raise a whirlwind of indignation in England. For instance, ten or twenty men are employed on a run. For the purposes of their employer they are bachelors; they may have wives in the town, or they may not; they all sleep in the huts or whares (pronounced warry); they all take their meals in the men's kitchen, which must conform to certain specifications as to size, etc. A station cook prepares their meals. They have no sitting-room, no



amusements, no church or chapel or lecture-hall. On Sundays they wash their clothes. The New Zealander is one of the most long-suffering of men and is given to excess neither of vice nor of virtue, but after a spell of this sort of existence it is not marvellous if he finds his way to the nearest hotel and squanders his month's cheque. As for the land-owner, he grumbles at his land-tax, at his liabilities in case of accidents, at his road-tax when he does not get roads, and at the high rate of wages, but he escapes much of what time-honoured custom and public opinion would force him to do for his tenants and his labourers in England. It must not be forgotten that while a large estate at home carries a number of tenants and cottagers, all living their own family life, a large estate in New Zealand is almost always a tract of uninhabited country given over to raising sheep, and the men employed are there solely for their work's sake; the tie between master and man is only that which law or convenience imposes for the time being.

It was to prevent the accumulation of land in a few hands that the Land for Settlements Bill was passed by the present Government. Under its provisions any estate can be compulsorily acquired by the Government at a valuation, in order that it may be divided into smaller holdings,—smaller, not small except in a country so sparsely populated; for though all purchasers and tenants are restricted, it is only to 640 acres of first-rate land or 2,000 acres of second-rate, any that they hold already being counted against them. Many owners have been glad to part with their estates in this way, and it is said that compulsion has as yet seldom if ever been necessary. There is no doubt that on the whole the policy has worked well in opening out the country. On the other hand, opponents of the Government declare that landowners are afraid of undertaking improvements,—planting, irrigating, building—of which the country stands in need, because such work would only make their estates more attractive for confiscation; and that landowners known to be hostile to the Government are singled out for ejection. Certainly as things were, something had to be done if colonisation and agriculture were not to be indefinitely retarded. The estates are parcelled out into blocks of varying size, and have been disposed of under one of three systems, by lease in perpetuity with option of purchase by lease for 999 years, and freehold. Tenants are compelled to

improve the land within a certain time, and up to a certain percentage of its value, by fencing, building, draining, clearing, and the like. They are also compelled to live on the land. Rent is charged at five per cent. on the capital value of the land and improvements, such as road-making, fencing, etc. There are, besides, many devices for easing the burden of the man who takes up uncleared land, or who engages in farming with a small capital.

Practically all the land in New Zealand has to be cleared before it can be brought under cultivation. Some was cleared long ago, and not even stumps remain. Much is still thick bush or, as we should say, forest, which must be felled and burnt before grass can be sown, and even though grass grows with surprising rapidity among the stumps and ashes, a year goes by before the most successful farmer can make anything of it; or it is fern-land, which is said always to be good; or it is manuka scrub, of which there are several varieties indicating as many grades of soil; or it is swamp land where flax grows. Whatever it is, hard work has to be put in before any crops can be raised. All the low-priced land is away from the roads and the shops, which last disability is perhaps the main secret of success; away from shops one cannot, and therefore one does not, buy things. Your Colonial is always ready to make a shift; he says that the new chum wants everything put ready to his hand. One constant reproach is that the Englishman never knows to how many uses a kerosene-tin can be put. We do not have kerosene-tins, which may be some excuse for us, but it is true enough that if we want a flower-pot or a dust-pan, a pail or a coal-scuttle, our first impulse is to buy one. The Colonial's would not be; and it is wonderful what a difference in money there is between these two mental attitudes.

No doubt some of the best brains in New Zealand are put into farming, and no doubt we at home are too conservative. Good management, as well as good luck, brings in to the New Zealand farmer his 20s. and 21s. per acre for wool alone, leaving him his lambs and his mutton and his flax-rights in addition. But when all that is said and allowed for, it remains true that the science of going without things is profitable to pursue, and that if some of our men and women would live as plainly and shop as little they also might have a balance at the bank before they were middle-aged. This, of course, is said with due regard to proportions and to the acknowledged fact that in England it would

not be possible to lead such a life as is led in the back blocks. It is all but impossible to make an untravelled Englishman understand even dimly what it is like. Let us take a few instances by way of conclusion.

The first shall not be very far out of the way, for it lies near a bar-harbour into which small coasting-steamers can enter at high tide, anchoring at a little township with one hotel, where such very rough visitors sometimes lodged, that once when the settler and his wife chanced upon ill-luck they had to spend a cold night in the goods shed. Next morning they took their boat and went up stream to within a short distance of their house. On another occasion they got stuck on a mud-bank, and had to wait the turn of the tide in wet weather,—they two and the baby. Their house was a one-roomed hut, the bed being insufficiently screened off by a short curtain. When strangers came they lay by the fire, and the hostess had to undress on the bed because when standing on the mud floor her feet could be seen. If clothing fell on the floor at night it was too damp to be worn in the morning; and once when they went away for a few days there was a fine crop of fungus under the bed on their return. But they were luckier than some because they could get an old Maori woman to wash for them. The house stood in a small clearing in the bush. As there was no pasturage for sheep, they had not yet come to the mutton-stage of diet, and the garden-stage is long after that.

To another settlement men were brought from home with a great flourish of trumpets, but at least a third of them were totally unfit for their job. The roads were roughed out, but not made. In the worst place earth had been thrown up in the middle of a swamp for half a mile or so, flax and scrub thrown over it, and you alighted from your horse and picked your way as best you could. One of the emigrants was a retired Indian officer, who assumed that Maori labour would be available, and that in two years or so he could complete a home fit for a wife and family. But there were neither materials nor labour for building, and as for building with his own hands, he had more than enough to do to provide for his own comfortless existence. He spent £5,000, got between £2,000 and £3,000 back, and went home to report failure. The story is only worth telling because the Colonists who stood to their guns, are now twenty years after, flourishing men, as

they deserve to be ; but still they are forty miles from a railway, and still their horses are bogged on the high road every winter.

The third and last example is in a sheep-country, where a man possessed by land-hunger has taken up more land than he can afford to pay for. He is by no means a penniless man ; many thousands are tied up in the holding that he already has. But in all countries the land is a greedy mistress, and for her sake man will sacrifice himself and his nearest. So this man has set himself to save a great price. He is his own shepherd and he has close on 2,000 sheep ; if you are up at sunrise you may meet him driving fat sheep along the dusty road. He is his own horse-keeper, gardener, stockman. With his own hands he felled and fired his remaining bit of bush, and besides all this there is always fencing to erect or to renew. He cannot afford to marry yet, but he has a sister to work for him, a cheaper plan for many reasons. For seven days in the week she works sixteen hours a day, when it is not seventeen, washing, churning, baking, sewing, poultry-raising, preserving, cooking ; she can harness the horse, and drive or ride it as well as a man ; she can help on the farm when work is crowding in. As for her expenditure, it is less than that of a servant, not counting the wages.

Now the point is not if all this is worth doing ; those who do it think it is, and they should know. But if a man took a bit of land and lived like that, adding penny to penny and pound to pound, he would find himself at the end of some years in easy circumstances, which is all that he can fairly expect to be able to say for himself in New Zealand.

## A BUSINESS-LIKE PARLIAMENT

A CERTAIN phrase about "mending or ending" has become indissolubly associated with one branch of the British Legislature. The aspirations summed up in that phrase may be the dreams of visionaries, but one section of them has been applied to the sister House in a spirit which at first sight is nothing if not practical. No one, indeed, talks in so many words of "mending" the House of Commons, but a great many men,—some of great experience, others of yet vaster ignorance—have talked of making it *business-like*. It is a convenient uncontroversial phrase; it has a good chance of winning support from men of the most diverse political opinions, and it has only one obvious defect,—the complete indefiniteness of its meaning. We can, of course, construct meanings for ourselves which would be definite enough. We can imagine, for example, the dining rooms of the Palace of Westminster being opened during the Recess as a first-class restaurant. That would be eminently business-like. We can imagine the House of Commons appointing a committee of its ablest financiers to conduct some gigantic commercial enterprise for the exclusive benefit of its members. That would be still more in keeping with the business ideas of to-day.

These pretty schemes, however, are only imaginings as yet, and in the meantime we must perhaps seek for an application of the business ideal more compatible with the traditions of a legislative body. Etymologically and historically the business of a Parliament is talking. Therefore we might reasonably suppose that the most business-like Parliament would be the Parliament that talked most. Yet the precise complaint brought against the House of Commons (negative criticism is, be it remembered, always precise) is that it talks too much. There is evidently a contradiction somewhere. Still we have gathered that a business-like House of Commons (and here our mending comes perilously

near to ending) is a House of Commons that does not want to talk, or is not allowed to talk, as the case may be.

Talking is generally regarded, most unjustly, as the antithesis of doing. We may then safely go further and say that a business-like House of Commons is a silent body with an enormous capacity for action. We are asked to look at results, not at the process of their attainment. The results presumably are the Acts which are passed and the sums of money which are voted. But are these results the work of the House of Commons as such? They have of course received its sanction, but that merely means that a majority of the House (that is the men whose function it is to support the Government, not only when they are in positive sympathy with it, but also whenever they are ignorant or indifferent about the point at issue) have voted in the right lobby, and have not through inadvertence or perversity followed the Opposition. Unless they have an un-business-like taste for rhetorical displays, that process contents themselves, the Government, and, for the most part, their electors; it is a process which occupies about fifteen minutes. If the sanction of results were the only reason for the House of Commons' existence, there would be no sitting through the dog-days, and no Autumn Sessions.

Further, it is evident that, if to be business-like is to produce a large body of results, the most business-like body in the world is one which is absolutely unanimous. But if we suppose a body of six hundred and seventy men assembled to make laws, the most obvious observation is that considerably more than six hundred of them are entirely unnecessary. The large number only increases the possibility of disagreement as new questions arise, and consequently is an infringement of the business ideal. The natural conclusion is that the simplest way to make the House of Commons business-like is to make it smaller. Unfortunately the process must go far before complete unanimity is reached. A Cabinet is a reasonably homogeneous body, but we have heard rumours of dissent even in its sacred consultations. We cannot logically rest until we reach an autocrat. An autocrat can make revolutions with a stroke of the pen; he, therefore, constitutes the most business-like body conceivable.

It is customary to identify aristocracy, or autocracy, with conservatism, or stagnation, and democracy with progress or



change. This of course is true ; for an aristocrat may roughly be defined as a man who has got a good thing and knows it, and a democrat as a man who is excluded from a good thing and knows that he wants it. That is why democracy is always extending its basis. Each section of the population in turn wins a good thing and becomes relatively aristocratic and conservative ; the next section of the population immediately demands the same good thing and becomes actively democratic and radical. The paradoxical feature of the British democratic assembly is that all its machinery is devised to hinder and hamper change. It votes money by complex processes because it wrested the power of voting money from the hands of business-like kings, who wanted money and intended to get it with the minimum of formality. It was the money of the Commons that was wanted, and the Commons showed that they too could be business-like and clung to it tenaciously. They were business-like also in their refusal to give any at all unless the Crown definitely asked for it. The result is that the House of Commons to-day has to spend many weary hours voting the money which is required to carry out its own chosen policy.

It is the same with legislation. In the early days of the House of Commons Bills were drafted by the king in response to petitions. The Commons, having asked for the Bill, were naturally ready to pass it, but they had first to go through the details with the utmost minuteness to see whether the king had fulfilled his promises. It was realised that a committee might be packed, and consequently every member assisted at the examination. But it is one thing to go through a Bill, on which all are in substance agreed, to see that it contains no saving clauses to the King's advantage, and a very different to struggle line by line through a complicated measure about which there is the most acute difference of opinion. The one examination may not unreasonably be performed by a large body ; the other is obviously ill-adapted to an assembly of six hundred and seventy. There is all the difference in the world between a body united within itself and defending itself against an extraneous authority, and a body whose very nature it is to be divided into two or more irreconcilable parties. There is all the difference in the world between a House of Commons fighting against the Crown for its own rights, and a House of Commons in which the Executive, backed by a majority, faces the criticism of the

minority. They are two different bodies, and the caution of the one becomes the obstruction of the other.

Yet the whole trouble is that they are the same body, and that the later House of Commons guards with intense jealousy the powers won by its predecessor, even though the methods of exercising these powers be disadvantageous to the majority. For the paradoxical result of Constitutional development has been that the executive powers, which the original House endeavoured to thwart and control, are now concentrated on the Treasury Bench and lead the majority into the lobby. The recurring opportunities for discussion are of value only to the Opposition, who occupy the position of the old House of Commons.

Now, since an unofficial member's Bill has practically no chance of becoming law unless it be fathered by the Government, the results of a Session are the work of the Cabinet. If the Government could act without a House of Commons, the results would probably be the same in kind, though possibly greater in bulk. Once more we come back to the position that the only use of a Parliament is its use as a talking-machine; and since the Opposition does the talking, it follows that the only valuable part of the House of Commons is its minority, whose function it is to criticise. Criticism takes time, and if you limit the time by closure, you may certainly prevent a great deal of useless and infinitely dreary criticism; but, on the other hand, you also prevent the House from producing the one thing which justifies its existence,—good criticism. Every member of the House is divided between two interests—his interest as an actual or potential ministerialist, and his interest as a potential or actual member of the Opposition. The first interest tends to make him subordinate every thing to the speedy carrying out of the will of the Government; the second makes him yearn for endless opportunities of debate and obstruction. If he wants the House of Commons business-like to-day, he will probably want it unbusiness-like to-morrow. Pure-bred democracy only lives in opposition, for democracy is always aspiration and never attainment. It is plain that any attempt to increase the amount of legislation means an increase of the powers of the Government at the expense of the valuable critical element in the House of Commons; it means the prohibition of good criticism as well as of bad; it means a step away from democracy and towards bureaucracy.

That a large amount of time is wasted, and even wilfully wasted, in futile talk, no one would deny. Yet if the duty of an Opposition is to oppose, it is their duty to talk not less, but more than is absolutely necessary. At any rate it is the plain truth that no Opposition will willingly give way on to-day's Bill in order that the Government may proceed with an equally obnoxious measure to-morrow. There is at present no choice between plentiful rhetoric and an unfettered Government, responsible only once in seven years. Make what rules you will, so long as there is an articulate Opposition, so long will there be obstruction. But in so far as you muzzle the Opposition, you kill the House of Commons.

There may be differences of opinion as to the amount of legislation which is necessary or desirable. With that question we are not now concerned. The interest of a Session is almost always concentrated on one big Bill, on which the Government stakes its existence. That Bill is sure to be guillotined. The application of the guillotine is always the signal for an outcry of the outraged minority, and the shorter the time given to unfettered discussion the more effective is the outcry. Hence we have the phenomenon which we may call vicarious obstruction, that is the obstruction of less important and less contentious Bills, in order to prevent the progress of the larger measure. Herein lies the true problem for the reformers, for vicarious obstruction means the wreck of many small Departmental Bills which offend nobody and probably are urgently needed by the few whom they concern. But here again no rules can be of the slightest avail. These Bills must either not require the sanction of the House of Commons, or they must be open to criticism. We must either boldly institute something more than *Droit Administratif* or we must confront the possibility of a waste of time. Such Bills may indeed go up to Standing Committees, but the report-stage has still to be reckoned with, and if the report stage be curtailed, the House is deprived of all right of detailed criticism. The remedy, if there is one, must lie with the Government. It is perhaps too much to hope for a Session devoted to small measures, urgently needed but not clamorously demanded,—for a King's Speech in which there is no echo of the hustings. But no Government can justly excuse itself for omitting to pass a really uncontentious measure. Such a measure only acquires a fictitious contentiousness, if it be discussed to the exclusion of the really contentious. If it comes on

when there is a certainty that no other business will be taken, it retains its true character. The suspension of the eleven o'clock rule, or better still of the five o'clock rule on Friday, would have the desired effect without hampering more important business and without unduly taxing the energies of the House. Suspensions are on general principles undesirable, but they are a convenient mode of announcing the Government's decision to pass a measure at all costs. That announcement, if accompanied by the necessary pledge that no other business will be taken, would probably suffice. Members of Parliament have no desire to sit up all night, or to miss their train to the country, for the sake of opposing a colourless Bill. The main hindrance to the passage of Departmental Bills is not obstruction, but the fact that no political capital is to be made out of them. In any case it is absurd to talk of gagging the House of Commons, and so depriving it of its chief function, to avoid adding one weary day to a weary session. Such reform, and it is the reform which seems to be implied in the word *business-like*, is no reform at all; it is destruction.

WILFRED JOHNSTON

## A NIGHT ON THE MAPPLIN SANDS

TOWARDS the end of our first season upon the Lower Thames a great and ambitious scheme came to the fertile brain of our leader B. We had already explored the old grey river many times as low as Gravesend, and now he dreamed of a more perilous voyage. August with its three weeks' holiday was near at hand, and we had been invited to spend the time at a farmhouse among the Norfolk Broads. It seemed to B. that we should be casting away the gifts of the gods if we did not work the *LYDIA* round by sea to Yarmouth; spend a fortnight with our friends; and then work her home again.

My friend B. united to an invincible obstinacy a tongue that could wheedle any man, and most women, to his will. It was true that the *LYDIA*, with her narrow beam, had already proved herself a disappointing sea-boat, even in the landlocked river waters above Gravesend; it was also true that her patched boiler and rickety engine, which always tested B.'s patient skill to the uttermost, might at any moment place us in some little danger; but he was confident that, with luck and calm weather, Yarmouth might be reached. And so, after some little argument and some few unheeded warnings, it was agreed that we would attempt the voyage. I wonder if explorers ever started upon a perilous passage with such light hearts and so little thought of difficulty as we did.

We boarded the *LYDIA* above Westminster Bridge early one Saturday morning, to find a strong east wind blowing that would be in our teeth every foot of the way down Thames. Our rate of steaming was always extremely moderate, most disappointing indeed when you considered the incessant coaxing exacted by the grumbling engine, but we had hoped, given decent conditions, to make Southend that evening upon the tide. Heaven only knew what difference that head-wind would make to our plans, but we did not worry greatly about such trifles as

we stowed our countless packages away below. Were not three weeks of holiday stretching limitless before our eyes?

Everything comes with patience in this life, even a sufficiency of steam in a stubborn, cross-grained boiler, and so at last we cast off from our buoy and began the voyage whose end was to differ so hugely from our imaginings. But for a certain space all things went well with us. The grey churning tide was strong beneath our boat: the battered engine was more amenable to patient argument than was its horrid custom; and in those first sheltered reaches the fierce head-wind was robbed of half its power. Through the crowded Pool, past white Greenwich and ugly, dirty Woolwich, we made our steady way, and still the gods were kind. Once we heard behind us a heavy splashing, and were forced to scuffle out of the way of a huge craft that was going down river in ballast, with her propeller half out of the water and a little strenuous tug beneath her bows. Later a long, dark French steamer overtook us, steering straight for our stern as though she wished to make a bump. An unwashed man, with curly hair and gold earrings, was leaning with folded arms upon the railings of her bow, and there was something in his grin that awoke the dormant patriotism in our breasts. We vowed that we would hold on our course, that this foreign craft should shift her helm to pass us; and we kept our vow until the lean, dark vessel was almost above our heads. Then we ate our pride and wallowed clumsily out of her way, and, as she passed us, the dingy gentleman in her bows grinned yet more widely and expectorated thrice as though in triumph. Such incidents make for wholesome humility.

Beyond Gravesend we were upon unknown waters, and, thanks to that head-wind, the position was somewhat serious. The tide, upon which we were largely dependent for our progress, was almost slack, and we were hours behind our proper time. The wind was rising and the *LYDIA* was rolling ominously in a surprisingly heavy, white-capped sea. Dusk was creeping over the wide grey river, and so far as we knew we could not anchor until Southend was reached. In answer to our hail a passing sailing-boat informed us that that somewhat squalid watering-place was seven miles away, and, in view of the tide which would soon be making upwards, the information was depressing. To add to our troubles the boiler and engine were combining in revolt. Certainly our situation was most serious.



Then, when things were at their blackest, B. from the bows gave a yell of hope, and we saw upon the port bow a string of scattered lights and what seemed to be calm water. It was decided swiftly that we should chance it, and we headed her through the dusk for the smooth water, recking nothing of a channel. In such fashion, although with more caution, did explorers of old times make a strange anchorage. Apparently our luck had deserted us, for we struck heavily, and steam was so low that reversing was almost hopeless.

Then in that dark moment out of the careless dusk there came a messenger, sent clearly to our aid by some kindly old-world goddess of the changeless river. He took the shape of a coastguard, in an extremely small boat, and his hair and beard and whiskers gleamed redly through the gloom. He laughed cheerily as he approached us, and through his laughter there rang the triumphant note of the hunter who sees his prey amid the toils, "You're properly fast," he said; "but I'll soon put you to rights. Will she reverse?"

"Yes, of course," answered B. valiantly from the engine-room, and R. almost groaned aloud to hear him. The coast-guard had made his boat fast to the rail, and clambering nimbly aboard he grasped the wheel. "Then let her go," he said, and to our surprise and joy the *LYDIA*, groaning, moved astern. Our pilot knew his way about the little port blindfolded, and he brought us to the blessed peace of calm water without mishap. Hole Haven, he informed us, was the name of our refuge, and we felt that our rescuer had deserved well of us. It was B. who fetched much silver from the common cash-box, and it was R. who blended, from much whiskey and little water, a potent fluid that should appeal to the naval heart. Both offerings our whiskered friend absorbed without demur.

Then, when he had vanished as he had come, and the fires were raked out, it was good to retire to the narrow cabin and there, where the lamp burned brightly, account for a titanic meal. I am inclined to agree with those who hold that the pipe which ends such a strenuous day has claims to rank as the best of all the pipes. It is, however, I admit, a question open to argument. Over that pipe and a ration of hot whiskey (which at such an hour was ever one of B.'s articles of faith), we laid our plans for the morrow. The tide would begin to run down at two in the morning, and we settled, with the confident enthusiasm of over-

night, that we would catch that tide. Then we turned in and slept the sleep of the weary.

I was awakened by the sounds of cursings, various and peculiar. From their unique phraseology I gathered that they came from the lips of B., and I groaned as the chill air bit through the cabin-door. The full daylight of a grey morning was come ; the hands of the cabin clock pointed to half past seven ; and it was only too apparent that we had missed the tide. B. was already upon deck, and I wondered sleepily if his language might not call down angry fire from Heaven. He appeared to be blaming all things and all men, but more especially R. and myself, for his own lack of wakefulness.

However, the situation had to be faced. We silenced B. by a process of counter-irritation, and fell to work. Things looked brighter, as is their habit, after a swim and much hot tea, and we settled that we must do our best against the tide. I feel that a previous remark of mine may have done injustice to the pipe which I smoked while waiting for the steam to rise. At any rate, as I smoked it, looking out upon the old, swift Thames, grey under greyer skies, I knew beyond all doubt that the first pipe of the day is best of all. And as I looked, there came to me a thought, trite enough in all conscience, of the many, many ships that have passed up those grey waters through the long, wild years. Danish and Dutch and Portuguese, friend and foe and eager trader, they have swept up our royal highway in ceaseless squadrons that no man may number. They have wrought their labours ; they have brought us shame or red gold and strength and power ; and they have passed to the land of dreams, the splendid ships and the keen-eyed men they bore ; but still the old, grey river surges up and down, untiring and unchanged.

It was B. who woke me callously at last from these romantic dreams.

We swung from the snug little port with some regret, and began our long beat down Thames against the tide. Only those who know the strength of that tide, and the weakness of our aged engine, can appreciate our rate of progress. We did not move perceptibly ; we crawled, and on either bow the marks on shore seemed stationary. Yet the *LYDIA* stuck to it doggedly, and doggedly did R. and B. drive her, and slowly, slowly we fought our way past those brown, dreary shores, until in the

distance we saw the long, snake-like pier that is the pride and glory of Southend. The morning was well advanced when at last we wallowed past it and held onwards for the sea.

There is a long chain of buoys that stars the Thames and is continued up the coast, how far I know not. It was my duty to follow this wide-linked chain, unheeding other matters, and there came a moment when before us was one black speck, and behind us its like, but all around us nought else save unbroken sea. Then were our hearts uplifted, and in our ears the salt wind whispered a faint-heard echo of a wondrous song, and for a little space we forgot the dust and the chains of London that were heavy on our limbs. It is a great and heartening moment when at last you are out of sight of land upon your own crazy time-worn boat, that has been purchased and maintained at some slight sacrifice. The breath of the woods in Spring is very good, but the smack of the salt upon your lips is a better thing. B. remarked thoughtfully that he could almost forgive the previous users of that engine now.

The hours had slipped away, and we lunched on deck as the *LYDIA* rolled along, feeling the tide less strongly than in the river. Then to our regret a low coast line became visible, far away on the port bow, and we were no longer on the open sea. But there was curious interest and a touch of romance in watching that strange dim land, and speculating upon its trend. For an hour or so we held along the buoys, and then, with the tide slack beneath us, we made our first serious mistake.

We left the friendly line of buoys which had served us well, and set a course that, clearing the point before us, should cut off a wide angle of sea. For a while all went well until the point was cleared in safety; then B. began to grumble that the water which we were dumping direct into our boiler was thick with sand, and that steam was dropping fast. We held stubbornly on our course, in the faint hope that matters might improve, but it was apparent that a crisis was imminent. It was, indeed, but scarcely the one we had expected. For suddenly, while still two miles from land, the *LYDIA* touched gently, surged on a few more yards, and then stayed her course. In our ignorance we had not calculated on the treacherous sand-flats that extend for miles within the buoys, and now the tide was ebbing fast beneath us.

It was something of a crisis, but, as a truthful chronicler, I must record that there was little or no confusion. We fancied that the LYDIA would lie clean down upon her side when the water fell, and in that case she would be no haven of comfort for her crew. It was settled that we should leave her, if only to endeavour to send a telegram to our anxious friends, and so, while B. raked out the fires, R. and I salvaged the cash-box and provisioned the dinghey. It was a solemn and rather gloomy moment when we left the LYDIA's deck and R. got out the oars. We had dropped the anchor overboard, but none of us were sure that the old boat would not bump her bottom out upon the hard sand. It was B. who expressed the common sentiment, as R.'s laboured strokes drew us farther and farther from the heaving LYDIA. "Well, it seems almost as though we took on too big a job," he said rather drearily, and filled his blackened clay. Never before had we heard that dauntless nature come so near to an admission of defeat.

We had hoped to make the land in the dinghey, but we had reckoned without the tide, which falls on these huge flats as swiftly as it rises. In a little while it grew too shallow for the oars, and at B.'s callous suggestions R. jumped overboard and began to tow. Soon we were all three wading, and at last it became apparent that the dinghey could be dragged no farther. So in its turn, it was deserted, and we set our faces for the shore still a long mile away. We were a draggled, rather downcast trio when at last we left the hard, bare, brown sand and reached a nude, inhospitable coast. R. and I were merely dirty and untidy, but B.'s unconquerable face was a mask of coal-dust, his flannel shirt defies mere words for its description, and he had lost a shoe in the long wade ashore. Yet still the spirit of the man rose serenely above such trifles.

We sat down amid the coarse, strong grass that fought for its existence with the sand, and discussed the situation. The day had cleared, and the sun was bright and warm. Two miles or so away we could see the LYDIA high and dry, and she did not seem to be leaning over very steeply. No houses were in sight, and beyond all question B., as we now realised, was in no fit state for inland exploration or for travel by rail. We could not expose that proud spirit to the taunts of curious rustics or the insults of strenuous officials. There was only one other course open to us, and we gave voice to it almost simultaneously.

"After all, it would be rather hard lines to desert the old craft," said B. ; and we all thought the same.

So we filled our pipes and started leisurely upon our return to the *LYDIA*, who would scarcely have had time to note our desertion. I do not think I shall ever forget those wide, brown, gleaming sands that seemed to stretch for mile after naked mile. They had been but lately covered by the waves, and now we walked across them dryshod and at our ease. Away to our left we saw a broad, blue river that lost itself in the land around a point. The tide had slid far away into the empty distance, but here and there it had left shallow patches of water and on all sides they caught and flashed the sunshine. It was all very quiet and very empty, and we seemed out of place amid its clean, strong barrenness, we three dirty, battered voyagers whom the mighty sea had scorned to harm.

One fact was clear to us when we reached the *LYDIA* at last. If we wished to recover the dinghey we must walk, before the tide came in, to where it lay and wait until we could row it back to the *LYDIA*. This would inevitably be after dark, and the project presented some slight danger, but it would have to be done.

The *LYDIA*, we found, had wooden projections to support her upon the river-mud, and she was not therefore lying at an impossible angle. All the afternoon we strolled about that great brown plain, and towards evening a curious local drove out across the sands from the unknown in quest of salvage. In that he was disappointed, but he gave us certain useful information. It seemed that the river we had seen led up to Burnham, and we decided that we must try to follow it on the morrow. It had become apparent to us that, although we might eventually reach Norfolk by sea, yet far too much of our precious holiday would be consumed in the process. So with sorrow we must forsake the sea, which had treated us with kindly, if contemptuous indulgence.

The sun dipped down amid a glory of crimson and gold, and at last, having looked to the anchor and the riding-light, we dropped from the sloping deck to the dry sand, and made our way through the twilight towards the dinghey. It was only a black patch through the gloom at last, but we reached it without difficulty, and sat down to await the tide. The great stillness was rather dreary, and a cold breeze crept moaning over the

huge waste. We took particular note of the *LYDIA*'s bearings, for beyond and all around her, as it seemed, the lamps of several lightships were twinkling. It would not do to lose our way in the darkness when the tide came in.

The time seemed rather long as we waited, and even B. fell silent, until at last we saw a glimmering line that raced upon us, faint and ghostly, through the gloom. It was the tide, sweeping in over the flats a foot or more in depth, and its white feet were swift. One moment we were inert and motionless; the next the dinghey was afloat beneath us, and R. and I had clutched the oars. B. conned us through the darkness, and I think we were all well pleased when at last we rubbed against the *LYDIA*'s side, as she swung snugly at her anchor. We turned in swiftly to rest while we might, and fell into the deep sleep that only exhaustion and hot whiskey bring to weary folk.

It was still dark when we felt the *LYDIA* touch, and woke with the knowledge that the tide had dropped once more. We struggled on deck, but the grey world was cold and nothing could be done. It might have gone hard with us if the wind had risen in the night, but it was still calm, and the *LYDIA* settled down upon the sand with gentleness. The cabin was at a somewhat cheerless angle, but we were too sleepy to heed such trifles. We crept back into it, lay down one above the other upon the slant; and never have I slept more soundly in any bed.

It was a glorious morning when we woke, to find the sand all bare and gleaming once again, and the *LYDIA*, staunch as ever, at rest upon her side. We knew that the tide would be making soon, and we wasted no time over our breakfast; we had, by the by, exhausted our store of bread, and found sweet biscuits but a sorry substitute. Far beyond us a smack lay hard and fast upon the sands, and we determined to steer towards her and inquire about the passage.

It was curious to see the tide come in by daylight in a long, leaping line that seemed to lift the *LYDIA* as by magic; but a fresh breeze was blowing, there was every prospect of rather heavy weather, and we had little time to lose. B. coaxed his fires with cunning until at last she made her head of steam; then R. plucked up the anchor and the *LYDIA* began to make her way through the dark seas. She plunged forward gaily, taking it green over the bows at times and rolling heavily, until we passed



the smack, and her people answered our hail with cheery bellowings. It was an anxious moment when we crossed what they called the Ridge, for they had roared that we should find little enough water above it; but it was passed in safety, and we made the river-mouth. Then, as the *LYDIA* toiled up the calm land-locked water, it was left to us to regret the sea with its charms and perils that we had left behind.

We had had good fun and a small experience worthy, perhaps, of remembrance; but nevertheless a certain dull flatness and sense of failure settled down upon our minds, as red-roofed Burnham waxed larger before our eyes, and the *LYDIA*, dragged and dirty, waddled to an anchorage.

JOHN BARNETT

## OUR YOUNG CITIZENS

It is not the fault of our social philosophers, though action still halts behind theory, if all our little school-children are not equipped with straight backs, tough muscles, and a moral intention by the time they leave school. Sir John Gorst urges us to be a nation of cooks; Mr. Michael Sadler is netting the inhabited world for ethical maxims; leagues of physical recreation popularise knowledge of medicine or gymnastics without prejudice. All this energetic interest is spent, as it should be, on the children of the elementary schools, from whose rudiments the rudiment of health had been grievously omitted.

For once in a way the nation has given the lead to individual effort. Private and public schools now lag some way behind national and elementary schools; but the ground is being made good, and in a year or two the positions are not unlikely to be reversed. At any rate, at many public schools the Michaelmas term has been marked by an educational experiment that may amount to a small revolution. One may say that for the first time the primal duty of a citizen to his nation has been explicitly and officially taught. Physical drill and cadet corps do not of course represent new ideas, but the sudden conviction among schoolmasters that it is their duty to educate the schoolboy's frame as well as his mind, and to interpret the nation to its sons, amounts to the discovery of a principle, and for the first time gives reasonable hope that the spasmodic efforts of several centuries are in a fair way to become a national endeavour.

But of the thousands in many nations who have wrestled with this problem none has found a formula which is not of military origin. Patriotism should be as vivid in peace as in war; but political, commercial, and ecclesiastical institutions have no machinery adapted to this purpose. The Houses of Parliament cannot affiliate the schools, nor can the Chambers of Commerce;

Church and State have not boundaries so coincident that the schools can be ranged as congregations of a natural Imperial Church. Whatever the reason, it is the fact that the Army and Navy alone are practically capable of providing a nucleus for citizen service ; and this may be accepted as a welcome necessity by every man in the country, whatever his creed or party, and should in theory be especially agreeable to the Socialist. The ultimate test of all devotion is willingness to risk death ; and in the last resort devotion to country is only expressible for the bulk of the nation in uniform. The Maccabees are the model patriots, and they fought for any but aggressive reasons. Rightly considered, the Army is the least Jingo institution in the country. It is a nucleus for national devotion of which the chief aspiration is peaceful prosperity. The popularity of military metaphor in religious observance, however corybantically it may be expressed, is in itself fit and proper. The ideals of Army and Church march together till they diverge each for its special purpose in a special field. It would be unnecessary to impress this interpretation of the military ideal if it had not been repeatedly stated that the feelings of religious and peaceable people were enough to negative at once any national compulsion to military drill in national schools. The public schools are not of course national schools in machinery and organisation. Most of them are little more than private schools if we enquire into the logic of their constitution. The houses are often privately owned ; in one case that I know of the headmaster is chairman of his own governing body ; and the existence of nearly all is dependent on the fees. But headmasters have to be as tender as politicians towards parental feelings, and when Lord Roberts first approached the schools on the subject of general drill, many of them felt and said that the chief difficulty was the Radical parent. Later enquiry absolutely disproved the reality of this fear. One headmaster consulted all parents on this point specifically and evoked only a single objection. I am convinced that no feeling has been more exaggerated and fostered by presupposition than this of anti-militarism. I know narrow and vehement Nonconformists who are keenly in favour of compulsory discipline for all boys. They wish it not so much on patriotic grounds, as in the hope of imbuing apprentices with a predisposition towards hard work. But their motive is of small concern ; it is enough that even political extremists do not associate military drill with a political or Jingo creed.

Nearly two years ago the headmasters in conference recommended general military instruction in schools. A special committee met to discuss the suggestion, and the drill instituted last term at Rugby, Harrow, Clifton, St. Paul's, Bradfield, and many other schools, represents the first attempt to carry out their recommendations. The campaign has progressed much more rapidly than it would have, thanks to the youthful zeal of Lord Roberts, who, in the intervals of organising a wider scheme, has found time to encourage by his advice and presence school cadets all over England. But, splendid as is the privilege of citizen service, admirable as the endeavour has been to realise the ideal, I believe it will fail of a part of its special intention, and altogether miss its greater opportunity, if it follows what seems to be the present line of development. The scheme is beset with practical difficulties. The time-tables at public schools are now so crowded with necessary engagements that both boys and masters suffer mentally and physically from want of freedom to realise their own tastes and characters. The new drill conflicts with the drill of the established corps and sets up many jealousies and rivalries. It has to be so wedged into a press of occupations that it must produce discomfort in all, and must earn the unpopularity that naturally falls to the new-comer. The fear is that it may bring disgust where it ought to arouse zeal, and instead of teaching the joy of discipline may foster the vice of perfunctoriness.

If this reform, so eagerly desired, is to justify its claims, two further changes are necessary. In the first place it must be accepted, not in the present temper, as an added burden or even privilege, but as a substitute for some less worthy occupation. The conviction is general among all schoolmasters actively engaged in the organisation of the scheme that time must be subtracted from sedentary lessons to make room for the athletic lesson. But so far headmasters have been too timid to accept the logical result of this innovation. The second desideratum will be more widely disputed among schoolmasters and military men. But certainly it will be felt among the much maligned class of parents that drill will not justify itself fully unless it is designed, on the naval model, to benefit the individual physique as well as the nation's *moral*. The only sound objection to military drill is in its nature neither social nor political, but physical; and in the correction of the physical defects of military training lies the

opportunity of the schools. All the schools that have adopted the headmasters' minute are organising different forms of drill, and no one with any eye for the individualism of English character will wish to impose uniformity; but here is so fine an opportunity, first of improving the physique of children, secondly of arresting the extreme worship of games, that no trouble should be spared nor advice resented which shall help to discover and perfect the best model for general training. This drill, if it is to be permanent, must be made physically effective and mentally interesting, as well as precisely military.

I propose to sketch briefly what seems to me, after a study of most of the experiments now being tried, to be the right line to work on. The scheme is not in essentials very different from the drill now practised at Clifton, a school which has some right to be regarded as a pioneer in physical training.

One may see on a public holiday in Sweden ten thousand persons grouped together to witness a gymnastic drill in which a thousand or so of gymnasts take part. The spectators exhibit the same delight as our crowds on the football field. The rhythm and regularity of concerted movements give them such feelings as are only stirred in England by competitive struggles. We can scarcely understand this appreciation, our interests not being tuned to mathematical movement. In consequence, the science of gymnastics, which includes the science of perfecting the body, has languished, and the bodies of our citizens have been trained almost entirely on games. A belated suspicion has lately come upon us that health and strength can be taught as early, and ought to be taught as strictly, as language or mathematics. Almost as few children breathe in rhythm as lisp in numbers. Waistcoats, the special target of Almond's scorn, narrow chests and nurse consumption. Hearts and lungs are muscular organs which need exercise as much as the muscles of the thigh or the biceps. But though suspicions of this sort are hardening into conviction, the public schoolboy may still live from twelve to nineteen without an hour's official attention to his senses or his organs. No doubt a public schoolboy is on the whole a fairly healthy product; but no one who has studied the statistics of training at Loretto can doubt that under Almond's system, which was anything but perfect, the health and development of the boys rose twenty per cent. above the normal. In the elementary schools the master may at any moment interrupt a lesson with five or ten

minutes' drill, and most of the masters believe that the more this interruption is allowed the better are the results on the intellectual work. Of the benefits to temper and health there can be no question. The elementary schoolmaster has the right philosophy. Every one, I believe, looking back on his school-days will acknowledge that in all long-lesson days, as they were technically called at Shrewsbury, a fair proportion of his time was absolute unqualified waste. The custom was to devote two consecutive hours on Friday afternoon to algebra; and it is a plausible contention that the dearth of mathematicians in the school-lists of honours was primarily due to this ludicrous system. It was a drawling and stretching period. A peculiarly silent and scentless sweet, as members of the Shop Committee noted, was regularly purchased in enormous quantities between lunch and school on Fridays. The shop was the only thing to profit by the system. Had those two dreary hours been divided by half an hour of Swedish exercises or compulsory leap-frog, the sum of algebraic knowledge among old Salopians would probably have been increased by every moment withdrawn from instruction on the subject. This instance is an extreme illustration of sedentary excesses. But the prime secret of bodily development in children is their natural restlessness. If, as indeed you must, you bully children into still behaviour and put them into crowded and unhealthy postures, if you force them to twist their vertebræ over the desk and stiffen their eyes on books and writing, an artificial and scientific compensation is inevitable. A breezy truant needs no physical drill, but truancy is now impossible, and "going to school on the hillside to be taught of birds" is no longer a feasible alternative. For this reason the public school system seems to me demonstrably worse than the elementary, though in the village school is practised in one detail the most refined cruelty known to English education. To place children of five years old in stiff rectangular postures for hours in a day on a backless bench is nothing less than physical murder. Probably the raising of the minimum age to six, as in all Continental countries, will be one of the next steps in educational reform.

It seems ordained among English institutions that the Navy alone shall discover excellence by its own initiative, and in the naval education alone are the claims of limbs, body, and mind sensibly recognised. The Swedish drill is well understood and practised by naval instructors, and naval officers are so thoroughly



impressed with the excellence of its effects, that they are sending out members to proselytise the schoolmasters. A nation requires sons who are strong as well as capably patriotic ; and, now that at last, under the urgency of a gallant soldier, schoolboys are to be instructed in the elements of a citizen soldier's duty, it were a grievous neglect of opportunity not to associate the military training with a scientific drill which we know to be one of the most efficient agents of good health. Every parent in England would be glad enough that three or four half-hours a week should be deducted from sedentary lessons for lessons in health ; very many would object to the reduction in favour of military training ; and on this count alone it would be wise for the schools, and indeed for the Army, with its recruits, to give the first emphasis to gymnastic drill, to the production of health, and from this alphabet to build up the learning of the citizen soldier. It is a matter of detail how the two classes of exercises should be apportioned and dovetailed into one system ; but I believe that boys have a quick instinct for concerted action in large bodies, and that under capable officers a very few hours a term would suffice for teaching the more important lessons of the drill, so that the daily half-hours might be principally given up to physical exercises, in which the members of the school-corps, as the rest, might join.

But nothing can be done to any purpose unless the time be taken out of lessons and the drill treated as an educational subject, so that it shall be accepted in the ordinary course. The time cannot be well subtracted from games, and it will be enough if these hours are made to yield leisure for the rifle-practice. What I should urge, then, as the ideal is that at least half an hour three days a week, if possible before luncheon, should be given up to what may be called gymnastic,—the nature of the gymnastic I will outline later ; that once a week every boy should have instruction in rifle-shooting, either at the butts or with the miniature rifle, a lighter and handier tool than the Morris tubes ; that three or four times a term the whole school be taken in a military formation for discipline in concerted movements.

As I have said, the finer success of any such effort would depend principally on the nature of the drill. Dulness kills the utility of most physical exercise ; and all these breathing-exercises and swingings of leg and body now condensed into a number of much advertised systems are useless, because antipathetic, to anyone

who has enjoyed or anticipated the vitality of a game. It is therefore necessary to discover whether this dulness cannot be overcome and gymnastic exercise given some of the attraction of athletics.

Here and there physical drill is included in the curriculum of public schools. At Eastbourne, for example, time is deducted twice a week from what was known as third lesson; one day is occupied with rifle-drill, in accordance with the physical recommendations laid down in the military drill-book, the other with dumb-bell exercises. So far as it goes the drill is found valuable and works smoothly with school arrangements. While one sergeant, under the eye of an officer, is drilling the boy-squad, another drills recruits for the corps, and a third takes the very small number of boys who are not in the corps. But even such tentative and half-hearted attempts as this are new and are rare. Accomplishment lags behind theory. Bacon wrote, to the approval of the seventeenth century and every successive age: "I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war." That games are far from doing this is indisputable, though games will, and should, have pride of place in out-of-door amusements. The deficiency in games is partly anatomical, partly social. The thing to remember in all boyish occupations is that the physical framework is of more importance than muscle. To give the commonest example, weak lungs and a pot-belly are the direct results of improper development, the first of the lungs, the second of the vertebræ. We have not discovered in England any gymnastic or athletic system founded on any anatomic knowledge. What we call gymnastics are devised, as I think Mr. F. H. Grenfell pointed out, to suit the apparatus of the gymnasium rather than the frame of the gymnast. So far as my study of different systems goes, all that are of any great value for boys derive their merit from the qualities most perfectly developed in the Swedish system.

What I mean by the social defects of games, as compared with drill or gymnastics in the narrow sense, is that to fail in them may vex many boys whose character is manly and patriotic, and whose spirit is naturally touched to finer issues. A squad is the most democratic of all institutions, because in it intention and aim matter supremely, while physical equipment, which

often augurs no more than a good eye or strong legs, foredooms no one to failure. Yet few who have played them would condemn games ; the point rather is that gymnastics should aim at absorbing some of their qualities, and I am convinced that in some degree this may be done.

Rifle-shooting is in itself a sport and an exercise, a discipline and an interest ; but its harmonics, so to speak, are not properly appreciated. Boys now practise only at the miniature ranges and only from a prone position ; they should rather be taught from every position and practised in these positions away from the range. I know a champion skater who professes to have learned all his skating, in theory at any rate, before the looking-glass in his bedroom ; and good rifle-shooting is perhaps hardly less a question of ease of posture and balance than of strength or eye. So soon as ever a good target is made on the miniature range the boy should be promoted, where possible, to the longer range with the service rifle. Rifle-shooting may be taken as an example of a wider principle. Swedish exercises, as I have said, are designed with extreme anatomical skill, and their practice would ensure better chests and backbones for the rising generation ; but these are not competitive, they are not stimulating ; and their dulness, to our game-inspired youths, prompts a perfunctory spirit. They have their zest, nevertheless, when the right principle is understood. If an occupation is not competitive it must be progressive. You must compete against your inferior self of yesterday if you cannot compete against your fellows. All gymnastics have been ruined by the failure to realise their progressive opportunities. I believe that at Clifton it is intended to drill the whole school in a series of squads, removes from the lower to the higher being made as other removes in school. But this is not enough ; what is wanted is that the higher branches of the gymnastic be genuinely inspiring. The naval authorities, now as ever in the forefront of administrative progress, are experimenting with ju-jitsu, the most thrilling of gymnastic games yet invented, and the most practically useful. I would have the training in ju-jitsu as one of the complementary games of the Swedish or other drill. And there are others not less attractive and more English. Surely a well-equipped boy ought on leaving school to be able to swim, to ride, and to defend himself. All forms of self-defence may be said to have the stimulating qualities of a game,—ju-jitsu,

fencing, boxing, single-stick, quarterstaff, wrestling ; and all of these, as well as some more narrowly athletic exercises, such as jumping, pole-jumping, vaulting, might be taken as the final stage of the drill which is to have its place in the curriculum.

Behind these details lies a larger question than physical health or military efficiency. For generations our schools and universities have been losing touch with the nation. From the age of ten to twenty-four the normal boy is under the uniform influence of a society in which the national sense is not expressed or encouraged. Ambition is towards athletics or scholarship, not citizenship, and it is not felt that *esprit de corps* ought to be a part of the spirit of citizen service. And yet it is as much the function of educational science to inspire this feeling as it is of ethical science to teach the love of good conduct.

It is not easy to find a compelling link between the spirit of the nation and the school, but it has been found in the newer world, which here, more truly than in politics, may come to redress the balance of the old. In Australia the young idea loves to shoot almost as keenly as the English yeomen who won the day at Poitiers ; in New Zealand only the organisation of Rugby football calls out more enthusiasm than the Cadet Corps ; in both the schoolboy is made to feel himself a national person. Anti-militarists in England may well digest the fact that in New Zealand, the most socialistic, and in Switzerland, the most democratic region on the earth's surface, the youth of the country are most clearly taught that personal service to their country's needs is a universal duty which begins in infancy and extends to age.

W. BEACH THOMAS.

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